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FEB
72

Sir Isaac Newton.

THE BRITISH PLUTARCH.

THE LIFE OF ISAAC NEWTON.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON was descended of an antient family, which had its origin at Newton, in Lancashire; but removing thence, was afterwards seated at Westby, in Lincolnshire; and, about the year 1730, becoming possessed of the manor of Woolsthrope, in the same county, fixed its residence upon that demesne. Here this prodigy of mathematical learning was born, upon Christmas-day, in 1642.

His father dying, left him lord of that manor while he was yet a child; and a few years after, his mother engaged in a second mar-

riage: however, being a woman of good ſenſe, and of an antient family herſelf of the name of Aſcough, ſhe did not neglect to take a becoming care of her ſon's education; and, at twelve years of age, put him to the free-ſchool, at Grantham, in the ſame county. It was her deſign not to breed him a ſcholar; therefore, after he had been at ſchool ſome years, he was taken home, that (being deprived, as he was, of his father) he might betimes get an inſight into his own affairs, and be able the ſooner to manage them himſelf. But, upon trial, the youth ſhewed ſo little diſpoſition to turn his thoughts that way, and at the ſame time ſtuck ſo cloſe to his book, that his mother concluded it beſt to let him purſue the bent of his own inclinations. For that purpoſe ſhe ſent him back to Grantham; whence, at eighteen years of age, he removed to Cambridge, where he was admitted into Trinity-college, in the year 1660.

The ſtudy of the mathematics had been introduced into the univerſity in the beginning of this century. From that period, the elements of geometry and algebra became generally one branch of a tutor's lectures to his pupils; but particularly Mr. Newton, at his admiſſion, found Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Barrow, the moſt eminent mathematician of the time, fellow of his college. Mr. Lucas alſo dying ſhortly after, left, by his will, the appointment for founding his mathematical lecture;

ture; which was ſettled in 1663, and Mr. Barrow choſen the firſt profeſſor.

Our author, therefore, by thus turning his thoughts to the mathematics, ſeems to have done no more than fall in, as well with his own particular ſituation, as with the general taſte of that time; but then it is univerſally confeſſed, he did it with a genius that was ſuperior to all that ever went before him in any time, Achimedes only excepted.

For a beginning, he took up Euclid's Elements, he run his eye over the book, and at ſight was maſter of every propoſition in it. This done, the youthful vigour of his underſtanding would not ſuffer him to ſtay and ſit down, in order to contemplate the ſingular excellence in that author's elegant manner of demonſtrating, whereby the whole ſeries and connection of the truths advanced is continually kept in view up to their firſt principles.

This neglect, however, he was ſenſible of in his riper age; but his ingenuity in confeſſing an error, which otherwiſe no body could have ſurmiſed, and that too after he was grown equally full of years and honour, by ſetting out in another way, was, in him, only a ſlender inſtance of a moſt amiable ſimplicity of diſpoſition.

It was not till the latter part of his life, that Dr. Pemberton became known to him, and then,

"He ſpoke, even with regret, of this miſtake at the beginning of his mathematical

ſtudies, in applying himſelf to the works of DesCartes andother algebraical writers, before he had conſidered the Elements of Euclid with that attention which ſo excellent a writer deſerves."

After all, if this was a fault in him, it was a fault that actually gave birth to all thoſe vaſt improvements which he afterwards made in theſe ſciences.

The truth is, when he came to the college, Des Cartes was all the vogue. That eminent mathematician and philoſopher had greatly extended the bounds of algebra, in the way of expreſſing geometrical lines by algebraical equations, and thereby introduced a new method of treating geometry.

Our author ſtruck into this new analytical way, and preſently ſaw to the end of the fartheſt advances made by Des Cartes; but having ſounded the depth of that author's underſtanding, without feeling the extenſive power of his own, he proceeded to read thoſe pieces of Dr. Wallis which were then printed, and particularly his Arithmetica Infinitorum. Here our author firſt found that matter which ſet his boundleſs invention to work.

In this ingenious performance, the celebrated author had carried the menſuration of curve lined figures to a pitch which had not as yet been exceeded. Amongſt others, he had ſquared, or given the areas of a ſeries of curves

curves expreſſed in the way of Des Cartes, by algebraic equations, proceeding in a certain geometrical progreſſion; whereby it eaſily apppeared, as he ſhews, that, if, between each of theſe areas another could be found, ſo that the terms of the aggregate ſeries, after ſuch interpolation, ſhould be to each other, continually in the ſame ſcale of proportion; then the firſt of the interpoled areas would give the quadrature of the circle. But, how to perform this interpolation, was, to him, an inſuperable difficulty; here, therefore, he was forced to put a ſtop to his reſearches at this period.

In the winter, between the years 1664 and 1665, Mr. Newton took up the ſubject, and, tho' ſcarcely twenty-two years old, preſently paſſed the bounds that nature had ſet to his great præcurſor; and, from this beginning, by an amazing ſagacity, joined to the moſt intenſe application, carried the doctrine of infinite ſeries, in leſs than two years time, almoſt to perfection. But this could be completed only by the help of the method of fluxions, which was invented by him, in the ſpring of the year 1665; and took its riſe from a circumſtance not much unlike that which gave birth to the former.

Mr. Fermat had, about the year 1630, hit upon a way of determining the Maxima and Minima, by a method of the ſame kind with that of fluxions; he had likewiſe drawn tangents to curves, in ſome of the leſs difficult

caſes. An inſtance of this method is given by Andrew à Schooten, in his Commentary on Des Cartes's Geometry, printed in 1649.

Mr. Newton reading that author, in 1663, took notice of this method, and remarked, that it was confined to ſimple rational quantities only. Therefore, having now, by purſuing the method of interpolation, found out his famous binomial theorem, and made it general, by the happy thought of uſing indefinite indices, or exponents of powers; he obſerved, the rule for drawing tangents, which he had ſeen in Schooten, thereby became univerſal, and might be extended, by this means, to quantities involved either in fractions or ſurds, and with the ſame eaſe too, as to rational powers or roots.

By this means, the operations of multiplication, diviſion, and extraction of roots, were reduced to one common way of conſidering them; whence the bounds of analyſis were much extended, and a foundation laid for its becoming univerſal.

After this, he preſently perceived the way of applying the ſame rule to find the degree of curvature in curves at any given point; and, being now ſenſible, that this rule, by the help of his indefinite indices, would ſerve for finding the proportion of indeterminate quantities of any kind, he thought of laying a foundation ſuitable to the large extent of it. To this end, he conſidered, that mathematical quantity might, very agreeably to nature, and

even

even daily experience, be conceived as generated by local motion, either uniform or continually accelerated; and that either in one unvarying proportion, or changing in any given rule of variation.

To reduce ſo general a principle into a proper form for calculation, he obſerves, firſt of all, That, as hereby quanties became greater or leſs, according to the greater or leſſer velocities of the motion with which they were generated, hence the whole buſineſs conſiſted in determining the proportion of theſe velocities. But the conſideration of different degrees of velocity neceſſarily involved that of time, and abſolutely depended upon it. Therefore he compared the motions of all other quantities with that of time; and, from the flowing of time, and the moments thereof, he gave the name of flowing quantities to all quantities which encreaſe in time; and that of fluxions to the velocities of their increaſe; and that of moments to their parts generated in moments of time.

Obſerving then, that time flowed uniformly, he repreſented it by ſome other quantity, which was conſidered as flowing uniformly (for inſtance, in determining the areas of curved-lined figures, he repreſented it generally by equal parts of the abſciſſa, and its fluxion by an unit), and conſidering the moments of time, or of its exponent, as equal to one another, ſuch moments he commonly repreſented by the letter o drawn into an unit.

The other flowing quantities he repreſented by the ordinate, in computing the quadrature of curves, or, generally, by the final letters of the alphabet, x, y, z; their fluxions by the ſame letters in a different form, or elſe diſtinguiſhed by points over them, $\dot{x}$, $\dot{y}$, $\dot{z}$, &c. and their moments he expreſſed by their fluxions, drawn into a moment of time $\dot{x}o$: but did not confine his method to the uſe of theſe, or any particular ſymbols of fluxions.

Every thing being thus prepared, he reduced the whole inquiry to this general problem, "From a given equation, involving any number whatever of fluents, to find the fluxions, and vice verſa."

This problem he immediately applied to all the ſubjects which the methematicians of that time were buſied in ſearching into; and puſhing through every difficulty as it aroſe, he preſently brought it to that perfection, eſpecially in the quadrature of curves, the ſubject which firſt ſet him to work, that, in any propoſed equation whatever, expreſſing the nature of a curve, he could tell, whether ſuch curve were poſſible to be ſquared or no; and then, if poſſible, could actually give the ſquare, either in finite terms, (that is, accurately, if that could be done) or elſe, by continual approximation in an infinite ſeries; and this in leſs than a quarter of an hour.

In all theſe enquiries he knew not what it was to be repulſed, his ſagacity always carrying him through every oppoſing difficulty up

to

to the end which he aimed at, reſted within thoſe limits only, which he himſelf thought proper to put to ſuch kind of ſpeculations. But he had now laid in a ſufficient ſtock of theſe materials, which he knew how to enlarge too if there ſhould be occaſion for it; and he could not think of throwing away his time upon meer abſtracted ſpeculations, how entertaining ſoever they might be. Accordingly, he now turned his thoughts to a ſubject of more immediate uſe.

Des Cartes, in his Dioptrics, the beſt of his performances in philoſophy, taking up with the commonly received opinion, that light was homogeneous; had, upon this principle, firſt diſcovered the laws of refraction, and demonſtrated, that the perfecting of teleſcopes depended on finding out the way of making the glaſſes in elliptic, parabolic, or hyperbolic figures.

The beſt mathematical wits were now at work upon this ſubject; particularly Mr. (afterwards Sir Chriſtopher) Wren had, about this time, made conſiderable advances towards compleating this ſo uſeful an invention, as it was then thought to be.

Mr. Newton, therefore, no ſooner got back to the college, than he applied himſelf, in the year 1666, to the grinding of optic glaſſes of other figures than ſpherical, having no diſtruſt as yet of the homogeneous nature of light, but not hitting preſently upon any thing in this attempt which ſucceeded to his mind, he pro-

cured a glaſs priſm, in order to try the celebrated phænomena of colours, not long before diſcovered by Grimaldi.

He was much pleaſed at firſt with viewing the vivid brightneſs of the colours produced by this experiment; but, after a while, applying himſelf to conſider them in a philoſophical way, with that circumſpection which was natural to him, he became immediately ſurprized to ſee them in an oblong form; which, according to the received rule of refractions, ought to have been circular: yet, at firſt, he thought the irregularity might poſſibly be no more than accidental; but this was a queſtion, he could not leave without further ſatisfaction: he therefore preſently invented an infallible method of deciding it; and this produced his New Theory of Light and Colours.

However, the theory alone, unexpected and ſurpriſing as the diſcovery was, did not ſatisfy him; he rather conſidered the proper uſe that might be made for improving teleſcopes: which was his firſt deſign.

To this end, having now diſcovered light not to be homogeneal, but an heterogeneous mixture of differently refrangible rays, he computed the errors ariſing from this different refrangibility, and finding them to exceed ſome hundreds of times thoſe occaſioned by the circular figure of the glaſſes, he laid aſide his glaſs works, and took reflections into conſideration.

He

He now underſtood, that optical inſtruments might be brought to any degree of perfection imaginable, provided a reflecting ſubſtance could be found, which would poliſh as finely as glaſs, and reflect as much light as glaſs tranſmits, and the art of giving it a parabolic figure be alſo obtained. But theſe ſeemed to him very great difficulties; nay, he almoſt thought them inſuperable, when he farther conſidered, that every irregularity in a reflecting ſuperficies, makes the rays ſtray five or ſix times more from their due courſe, than the like irregularities in a refracting one.

Amidſt theſe thoughts, he was forced from Cambridge by the plague; and it was more than two years before he made any farther progreſs therein. However, he was far from paſſing away the hours in a negligence of thought in the country; on the contrary, it was here, at this time, that he firſt ſtarted the hint that gave riſe to the ſyſtem of the world, which is the main ſubject of his Principia.

The conſideration of accelerated motion in the method of fluxions above-mentioned, which he was ſtill improving, unavoidably led his thoughts to the ſubject of gravity, the effect of which is an inſtance of that motion in nature. And now, as he ſat in a garden alone in the country, he very naturally fell into ſome reflections on the power of this principle; That, as this power is not found ſenſibly diminiſhed at the remoteſt diſtance from the centre of the earth to which we can riſe, neither

at the tops of the loftieſt buildings, nor on the ſummits of the higheſt mountains, it appeared to him reaſonable to conclude, that this power muſt extend much farther than was uſually thought. Why not as high as the moon? ſaid he to himſelf; and, if ſo, her motion muſt be influenced by it; perhaps ſhe is retained in her orbit thereby: however, tho' the power of gravity is not ſenſibly weakened in the little change of diſtance at which we can place ourſelves from the centre of the earth; yet it is very poſſible, that, as high as the moon, this power may differ much in ſtrength from what it is here.

To make an eſtimate what might be the degree of this diminution, he conſidered with himſelf, that, if the moon be retained in her orbit by the force of gravity, no doubt the primary planets are carried round the ſun by the like power; and, by comparing the periods of the ſeveral planets with their diſtances from the ſun, he found, that, if any power like gravity held them in their courſes, its ſtrength muſt decreaſe in the duplicate proportion of the increaſe of diſtance.

This he concluded, by ſuppoſing them to move in perfect circles concentrical to the ſun, from which the orbits of the greateſt part of them do not much differ. Suppoſing therefore the power of gravity, when extended to the moon to decreaſe in the ſame manner, he computed whether that force would be ſufficient to keep the moon in her orbit.

In

In this computation, being abſent from books, he took the common eſtimate, in uſe among geographers and our ſeamen before Norwood had meaſured the earth, that ſixty Engliſh miles complete one degree of latitude; but, as this is a very faulty ſuppoſition, each degree containing about ſixty-nine Engliſh miles and an half, his computation upon it did not make the power of gravity, decreaſing in a duplicate proportion to the diſtance, anſwerable to the power which retained the moon in her orbit; whence he concluded that ſome other cauſe muſt at leaſt join with the action of the power of gravity on the moon. For this reaſon, he laid aſide, for that time, any farther thoughts upon the matter.

An eaſineſs ſo reſigned, as to give up a favourite opinion, founded upon the beſt aſtronomical obſervations of the whole planetary ſyſtem, is an illuſtrious proof of a temper exactly fitted for philoſophical enquiries.

Mr. Voltaire relates it, as an anecdote of particular uſe in the hiſtory of the human mind; as it ſhews, at once, both how great an exactneſs is neceſſary in theſe ſciences, and likewiſe how diſintereſted Mr. Newton was in his ſearch after truth.

It is indeed a little ſurpriſing, that he ſhould not then be acquainted with Mr. Norwood's Menſuration, which was made in 1635; and ſeems to be more ſo ſtill, that he did not inform himſelf, when he returned to Cambridge,

which

which he did ſhortly after; and, in the following year, 1667, was choſen fellow of his college, and took the degree of maſter of arts the ſame year, having proceeded bachelor of arts three years before. But at this time he apparently thought it not poſſible, that the old reckoning could be ſo groſsly wide of the truth as it really is; and he was remarkably clear of that vanity, which in other eminent inventors is uſeful, in making them forward to puſh the exerciſe of their inventive faculty. In reality, his thoughts were now engaged upon his newly-projected teleſcope by reflection; which, being a very uſeful invention, he was moſt deſirous to complete: and, in 1668, having conſidered what Mr. James Gregory propoſed in his Optica Promota, concerning ſuch a teleſcope, with a hole in the midſt of the object-metal to tranſmit the light to an eye-glaſs placed behind it, he thought the diſadvantages would be ſo great, that he reſolved, before he put any thing into practice, to alter Mr. Gregory's deſign, and place the eye-glaſs at the ſide of the tube, rather than in the middle; he then made a ſmall inſtrument, with an object-metal ſpherically concave: but this was only a rude eſſay, the chief defect lay in wanting a good poliſh for the metal. This therefore he ſet himſelf to find out, when Dr. Barrow reſigning the mathematical chair at Cambridge to him, on the eighth of November, in the year 1669, the buſineſs of that profeſſorſhip interrupted

rupted his attention to the telleſcope for a while.

In the mean time, an unexpected occaſion drew from our author a diſcovery of the vaſt improvements he had made in geometry by the help of his new analyſis.

Lord-viſcount Brouncker, the year before, had publiſhed a quadrature of the hyperbola in an infinite ſeries; which, by the help of Dr. Wallis's diviſion, was ſoon after demonſtrated by Mr. Nicholas Mercator, in his Logarithmotechnica, in 1668.

This being the firſt appearance of a ſeries of this ſort, drawn from the particular nature of the curve expreſſed in an abſtracted algebraical equation, and that in a manner very new, the book preſently came into the hands of Dr. Barrow, then at Trinity-college; who having, upon another occaſion, been informed ſome time before by Mr. Newton, that he had a general method of drawing tangents, communicated this invention of Mercator's to that fellow collegian: upon ſight of which, our author brought him thoſe papers of his own, that contained his Analyſis per æquationes numero terminorum infinitas.

The doctor peruſing it, ſtood amazed at the prodigious performance, and immediately acquainted his friend Mr. Collins with it; at whoſe requeſt he afterwards obtained leave of Mr. Newton to ſend him the papers. Mr. Collins taking a copy before he returned the

treaſure,

treaſure, thence got the means of diſperſing other tranſcripts to all the moſt eminent of his mathematical acquaintance. But, notwithſtanding this, it was not till many years afterwards, that the full extent to which our author had carried the invention came to be well underſtood.

Mr. Fontenelle obſerves, that it was natural to expect, that Mr. Newton, upon ſeeing Mercator's book, would have been forward to open his treaſure, and thereby ſecure to himſelf the glory of being the firſt diſcoverer. But this was not his way of thinking; on the contrary, we know, from his own words, that he thought Mercator had entirely diſcovered his ſecret; or that others would, before he was of a proper age for writing to the public. The empty name of barely doing what no body elſe could do, he looked upon as a child's bauble; his views were much higher, and more noble; he thought to build his fame upon a more ſubſtantial foundation.

Theſe ſpeculative inventions, therefore, however ingenious, were kept by him, as neceſſary tools and implements in his reſearches into the works of nature; there he knew they would be of uſe to him, and he knew too how to uſe them there to advantage; and in theſe views only it was, that he ſet any particular value upon them. Nay, he was now actually making this uſe of them, in diſcovering the properties and unravelling the ſubtle actions of light.

As

As his thoughts had been for ſome time chiefly employed upon optics, he made his diſcoveries in that ſcience the ſubject of his lectures, for the three firſt years after he was appointed mathematical profeſſor.

He had not finiſhed theſe lectures, when he was choſen fellow of the royal ſociety, in January, 1671-2; and, having now brought his Theory of Light and Colours to a great degree of Perfection, he communicated it to that ſociety, firſt to have their judgment upon it, and it was afterwards publiſhed in their Tranſactions of February nineteen, 1672.

The reaſon of this conduct is fully declared, in the following letter of his to Mr. Oldenburg.

Trinity-college. Feb, 10, 1671-2.

"SIR,

"IT was an eſteem of the royal ſociety for moſt candid and able judges in philoſophical matters, encouraged me to preſent them with that Diſcourſe of Light and Colours, which ſince they have ſo favourably accepted of, I do earneſtly deſire you to return them my cordial thanks. I before thought it a great favour to be made a member of that honourable body; but I am now more ſenſible of the advantage. For, believe me, Sir, I do not only eſteem it a duty to concur with them in the promotion of real knowledge, but a great priviledge, that, inſtead

ſtead of expoſing diſcourſes to a prejudiced and cenſorious multitude (by which means many truths have been baffled and loſt) I may with freedom apply myſelf to ſo judicious and impartial an aſſembly.

As to the printing of that letter, I am ſatisfied with their judgment, or elſe I ſhould have thought it too ſtrait and narrow for public view. I deſigned it only to thoſe who know how to improve upon hints of things; and therefore to ſhun tediouſneſs, omitted many ſuch remarks and experiments as might be collected by conſidering the aſſigned laws of refractions; ſome of which, I believe, with the generality of men, would yet be almoſt as taking as any I deſcribed. But yet, ſince the royal ſociety have thought it fit to appear publicly, I leave it to their pleaſure: and, perhaps, to ſupply the aforeſaid defects, I may ſend you ſome more of the experiments to ſecond it, if it be ſo thought fit, in the enſuing Tranſactions.

I have no more but to offer my acknowledgments of your kindneſſes in particular, and my thanks for the pains you are pleaſed to undertake in printing that letter.

"SIR,

"I am

"Your faithful ſervant,

"I. NEWTON."

But, notwithſtanding all this precaution which was taken in preparing it for public view, yet it was ſo abſolutely new and unſuſpected, and totally ſubverſive of all mens ſettled opinions in this matter; ſuch a nice degree of accuracy and exactneſs was neceſſary in making the experiments upon which it was founded; and the reaſoning alſo upon thoſe experiments was ſo very ſubtle and penetrating, that it no ſooner went abroad into the world, than it found oppoſers in all quarters where ever it appeared.

Our author was thus unexpectedly drawn into various diſputes about it; which being, for the moſt part, occaſioned, either by too much haſtineſs in trying his experiments, or elſe by reaſoning wrong upon them, were very grievous to him.

He had ſpent eight years in repeating the experiments which aſcertained the truth of the fact, and now thought to oblige the world, by diſcloſing one of the moſt hidden ſecrets of nature; and there was room to expect the benefaction would be received with all imaginable gratitude: but, ſteeped as they were in error, the diſcovery ſeems to have been conſtrued into a reproach of their ignorance; and they ſuffered for it.

By this ſpecimen, the great inventor clearly ſaw what would be the conſequence of giving the reſt of his Theory, where he knew there muſt appear ſo many yet more amazingly ſevere truths.

For

For this reaſon, he laid up his optical lectures, after he had prepared them for the preſs with a deſign to publiſh them: and, as he had referred, for the demonſtrations of ſome things therein, to his Analyſis per æquationes numero terminorum infinitas; his intention was, the lectures ſhould be accompanied with it: for which purpoſe he had enlarged and reviſed it, and caſt it into a better form. He had likewiſe illuſtrated it with a great variety of examples, and ſet the whole method of fluxions entirely in a new light. However, he had not completed his whole deſign, before the decree againſt publication was paſſed; for he had thought of adding the manner of reſolving ſuch problems as could not be reduced to quadratures, which he never completed.

In this conduct, our author evidently acted againſt his own fame; but that motive had little weight with him, when thrown in the ballance againſt the ſweet enjoyment of an unruffled ſerenity of thought; a bleſſing which he valued above all the glory that mathematics or philoſophy could heap upon him.

In the account which he gave himſelf, ſome years after, of theſe proceedings, he ſays,

"I blamed my own imprudence, for parting with ſo ſubſtantial a bleſſing as my quiet, to run after a ſhadow."

Yet theſe diſputes, vexatious as they were, did not hinder him from going on to finiſh his reflecting-teleſcope, the moſt immediately uſeful part of his optics; and, obſerving that there was no abſolute neceſſity for the paraboolic figure of the glaſſes, ſince, if metals could be ground truly ſpherical, they would bear as great apertures as men would be able to give a poliſh to, he completed another inſtrument of this kind; which anſwering the purpoſe ſo well, as, though it was only ſix inches long, yet he had ſeen with it Jupiter diſtinctly round, as alſo his four ſatellites, and Venus horned, he ſent it to the royal ſociety at their requeſt, together with a deſcription of it; which was afterwards publiſhed in the Philoſophical Tranſactions for the twenty eighth of March, 1672, Number eighty-one.

There are likewiſe, in the two immediately ſubſequent numbers, ſeveral further obſervations and particulars relating to this new invention, communicated by him in the view of ſeconding the deſign of the ſociety, to recommend it to ſome ſkilful artiſts, for further improvement, with reſpect to the two particulars which were ſtill wanting, a proper compoſition of metal, and a good poliſh.

The ſame year, 1672, he publiſhed, at Cambridge, in 8vo, Bernardi Varenii Geographia Generalis, in qua Affectiones Generales Telluris explicantur aucta & illuſtrata ab Is. Newton.

About

About this time, he had likewiſe ſome thoughts of publiſhing Kinckhuyſen's Algebra, but afterwards dropped that deſign.

In 1675, Mr. Hooke laying claim to ſome of his inventions in his New Theory of Light and Colours, he aſſerted his right thereunto with a becoming ſpirit; and, the following year, at the requeſt of Mr. Leibnitz, he wrote two letters, to be communicated to him, wherein he explained his invention of infinite ſeries, and took notice how far he had improved it by his method of fluxions; which, however, he ſtill concealed, by a tranſpoſition of the letters into an alphabetical order, that made up the two fundamental problems of it. This was done, that he might be at liberty to alter his method in ſome things, in caſe any body elſe ſhould find it out.

In the winter between 1676 and 1677, he found the grand propoſition, that, by a centripetal force reciprocally as the ſquare of the diſtance, a planet muſt revolve in an ellipſis about the centre of force placed in the lower focus of the ellipſis, and with a radius drawn to that centre deſcribe areas proportionable to the time.

In 1680, he made ſeveral aſtronomical obſervations upon the comet that then appeared; which, for ſome conſiderable time, he took not to be one and the ſame, but two different comets, againſt the ſuſpicion of Mr. Flamſtead.

However,

However, the conſequences of the theory of centripetal and centrifugal forces being the ſubject of much enquiry about this time, he received a letter from Mr. Hooke, explaining what muſt be the line deſcribed by a falling body, ſuppoſed to be moved circularly by the diurnal motion of the earth, and perpendicularly by the power of gravity; wherein he ſhewed, that it would not be a ſpiral line, but an eccentrical elliptoid, ſuppoſing no reſiſtance in the medium; but, in caſe of reſiſtance, it would be an eccentric ellipti-ſpiral, which, after many revolutions, would reſt in the centre at laſt; and that the fall of the body would not be directly eaſt, but to the ſouth-eaſt, and more to the ſouth than the eaſt.

This letter put Mr. Newton upon enquiring what was the real figure in which ſuch a body moved; and this enquiry gave occaſion to his reſuming his former thoughts concerning the moon: and Picart having, not long before, viz. in 1679, meaſured a degree of the earth, by uſing his meaſures, the moon appeared to be retained in her orbit purely by the power of gravity; and, conſequently, that this power decreaſes in the duplicate proportion of the diſtance, as he had formerly conjectured.

Upon this principle, he found the line deſcribed by a falling body to be an ellipſis, the centre of the earth being one focus; and finding by this means, that the primary planets really moved in ſuch orbits as Kepler had gueſſed, he had the ſatisfaction to ſee, that this enquiry, which

which he had undertaken at firſt out of meer curioſity, could be applied to the greateſt purpoſes. Hereupon he drew up near a dozen propoſitions relating to the motion of the primary planets about the ſun; which were communicated to the royal ſociety in the latter end of the year 1683.

The beſt mathematical wits were engaged upon this ſubject; and, among others, Mr. Halley, in 1683-4, having proved the duplicate proportion in general from Kepler's ſeſquialterate ratio, found himſelf, as well as the reſt, not able to carry the demonſtration through all the particulars.

Thus baffled, he applied, firſt, to Sir Chriſtopher Wren and Mr. Hook; but meeting with no ſatisfaction from them, reſtleſs as he was to puſh, if poſſible, this purſuit, as well as all others, in which he heartily engaged, to a degree of perfection, he took a journey in Auguſt to Cambridge, in order to conſult Mr. Newton.

Our author preſently informed him, that he had abſolutely completed the much deſired demonſtration; and Mr. Halley receiving it from him in November, made him a ſecond viſit at Cambridge; where he got his conſent, with ſome difficulty, to have it entered in the regiſter-books of the royal ſociety. After which, by Mr. Halley's importunity, and the requeſt of that ſociety, our author was prevailed with to finiſh the work.

The

The third book, being only a corollary of ſome propoſitions in the firſt, was then drawn up by him in the popular way, with a deſign to publiſh it in that form with the other two: but the manuſcript being preſented with a dedication to the royal ſociety, in April, 1686, Mr. Hooke, very injuriouſly, inſiſted upon his having demonſtrated Kepler's problem before our author; whereupon, rather than be involved again in controverſy, he determined to ſuppreſs the third book, till his friends prevailed upon him to alter that reſolution. However, he was now convinced, that it would be beſt not to let it go abroad without ſtrict demonſtration.

The book was put to the preſs by the ſociety ſoon after Midſummer, 1686, under the care of Mr. Halley, then aſſiſtant-ſecretary; and it came out about Midſummer, 1687, under the title of Philoſophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica.

From hence it appears, that this treatiſe, full of ſuch a variety of profound inventions, was compoſed from ſcarce any other materials than the few propoſitions before-mentioned, in the ſpace of eighteen months.

The ſecond edition, with great additions and improvements by the author, was printed in 1713, 4to, under the direction of Mr. Roger Cotes, profeſſor of aſtronomy and experimental philoſophy in that univerſity; who prefixed a preface, giving an account of the philoſophy contained in the book, eſpecially with

regard to the famed vortices of Des Cartes; which, though irrefragably refuted herein, ſtill had their abettors.

The laſt edition, with ſtill further improvements by the author, was publiſhed at London, in 4to, under the care of Henry Pemberton, M. D.

This book, in which our author had built a new ſyſtem of natural philoſophy, upon the moſt ſublime geometry, did not meet at firſt with all the applauſe it deſerved, and was one day to receive. Two reaſons concurred in producing this effect: Des Cartes had then got full poſſeſſion of the world; his philoſophy, was, indeed, the creature of a fine imagination, gaily dreſſed in a tempting metaphorical ſtile; he had given her, likewiſe, ſome of nature's true features, and painted the reſt to a ſeeming of nature's likeneſs, with a ſmiling countenance; beſides, whatever ſhe ſaid was eaſily underſtood; and thus ſhe yielded herſelf up, without any great difficulty, to her votaries. Upon theſe accounts, people in general even took unkindly an attempt to awake them out of ſo pleaſing a dream.

On the other hand, Mr. Newton had, with an unparallelled penetration, purſued nature up to her moſt ſecret abodes, and was intent to demonſtrate her reſidence to others, rather than anxious to point out the way by which he arrived at it himſelf. He finiſhed his piece in that elegant conciſeneſs, which had juſtly gained the antients an univerſal eſteem. Indeed,

deed, the conſequences flow with ſuch rapidity from the principles, that the reader is often left to ſupply a long chain to connect them; therefore it required ſome time before the world could underſtand it; the beſt mathematicians were obliged to ſtudy it with care before they could be maſters of it; and thoſe of a lower claſs durſt not venture upon it, till encouraged by the teſtimonies of the moſt learned: but, at laſt, when its worth came to be ſufficiently known, the approbation which had been ſo ſlowly gained, became univerſal; and nothing was to be heard from all quarters but one general ſhout of admiration.

"Does Mr. Newton eat, or drink, or ſleep, like other men?" ſays the marquis l'Hôpital, one of the greateſt mathematicians of the age, to the Engliſh who viſited him; "I repreſent him to myſelf as a celeſtial genius, entirely diſengaged from matter."

The general ſubject of the Principia is the doctrine of motion, which is the moſt conſiderable of all others for eſtabliſhing the firſt principles of philoſophy by geometrical demonſtration. The undertaking was begun by Des Cartes; but, taking up with groſs experiments, without examination, he derived his concluſions too haſtily. Mr. Newton both ſaw the miſtake, and, at the ſame time, how extremely difficult it would be to avoid it; but he had the reſolution to make the attempt,

and he alone had ſtrength to complete the execution.

To this end, by experiments made with the moſt accurate exactneſs, and obſerved with the niceſt circumſpection and ſagacity, he firſt diſcovers what are the real phænomena of motion ariſing from the natural powers of gravity, elaſticity, the reſiſtance of fluids, and the like; whence he riſes, by the help of his own ſublime geometry, to inveſtigate the true forces of theſe powers of nature; and then, from thoſe forces, demonſtrates the other phænomena: particularly, in ſettling the ſyſtem of the heavens, he demonſtrates mathematically, in the firſt book, what are the genuine effects of central forces, in all hypotheſes whatſoever that can be framed concerning the laws of attraction; then, from Kepler's rules, and other aſtronomical and geographical obſervations, he ſhews, what the particular laws of attraction are in nature; and proves, that this attraction is every where the ſame as the terreſtrial gravity; by the force of which, all bodies tend to the ſun, and to the ſeveral planets.

Then, from other demonſtrations, which are alſo mathematical, he deduces the motion of the planets, the comets, the moon, and the ſea.

In the height of all theſe profound, philoſophical reſearches, juſt before his Principia went to the preſs, the privileges of the univerſity being attacked by king James II, our author

thor appeared among the moſt hearty defenders; and was, accordingly, one of the delegates to the high commiſſion court; where the ſteady defence they made was ſo unexpected by the court, that the king thought proper to drop the affair.

After this, he was choſen one of the univerſity repreſentatives in the convention parliament in 1688, where he attended till its diſſolution.

Mr. Montague, afterwards earl of Halliſax, ſat likewiſe, for the firſt time, in that parliament; and, being bred at the ſame college, was well acquainted with our author's abilities; and undertaking the great work of recoining the money when he became chancellor of the Exchequer, he obtained of the king, for Mr. Newton, in 1696, the office of warden of the Mint.

This poſt put him in a capacity of doing ſignal ſervice in that affair, which was of ſo great importance to the nation: and, three years after, he was promoted to be maſter of the Mint: a place, communibus annis, worth twelve or fifteen hundred pounds a year; which he held till his death.

Upon this promotion, he appointed Mr. William Whiſton, then moſter of arts at Clare-hall, his deputy in the mathematical profeſſorſhip at Cambridge; giving him the full profits of the place: and, not long after, procured him to be his ſucceſſor in that poſt.

The royal academy of ſciences at Paris, having, this year, made a new regulation for admitting foreigners into their ſociety, Mr. Newton was immediately elected a member of that academy.

In 1703, he was choſen preſident of the royal-ſociety; in which chair he ſat for twenty-five years, without interruption, till the day of his death.

In 1704, he publiſhed, at London, in 4to, his Optics: or, a Treatiſe of the Reflections, Refractions, Inflections, and Colours of Light. He had now at times employed thirty years in bringing the experiments to that degree of certainty and exactneſs, which alone could ſatisfy himſelf. In reality, this ſeems to have been his moſt favourite invention.

In the ſpeculations of infinite ſeries and fluxions, as alſo in his demonſtrations of the power of gravity in preſerving the ſyſtem of the world, there had been ſome, tho' diſtant, hints given by others before him; whereas, in the diſſecting a ray of light into its firſt conſtituent particles, which then admitted of no farther ſeparation; in the diſcovery of the different refrangibility of theſe particles thus ſeparated, and that theſe conſtituent rays had each its own peculiar colour inherent in it; that rays falling in the ſame angle of incidence have alternate fits of reflection and refraction; that bodies are rendered tranſparent by the minuteneſs of their pores, and become opaque by

by having them large; and, that the moſt tranſparent body, by having a great thinneſs, will become leſs pervious to the light: in all theſe, which made up his New Theory of Light and Colours, he was abſolutely and entirely the firſt ſtarter; and, as the ſubject is of the moſt ſubtle and delicate nature, he thought it neceſſary to be himſelf the laſt finiſher of it.

The art of making experiments to a certain degree of accuracy is far from being a common attainment. The moſt trifling fact that falls under our notice, is complicated with ſo many others which compoſe or modify it, that it requires the utmoſt ſagacity even to gueſs at the particular ingredients of ſuch a compoſition, and the niceſt dexterity to diſtinguiſh them from each other. The facts to be examined muſt be reſolved into others, which are themſelves compounded; and ſometimes, if we happen to miſtake our way, we are led into endleſs and inextricable labyrinths. The truth is, the affair that chiefly employed his reſearches for ſo many years, was far from being confined to the ſubject of light alone: on the contrary, all that we know of natural bodies ſeemed to be comprehended in it; he had found out, that there was a mutual action at a diſtance between light and other bodies; by which both the reflections and refractions, as well as inflections, of the former were conſtantly produced.

To aſcertain the force and extent of this principle of action, was what had all along

engaged his thoughts; and what, after all, by its extreme ſubtlety, eſcaped even his moſt penetrating ſpirit. However, though he has not made ſo full a diſcovery of this principle, which directs the courſe of light, as he has in relation to the power by which the planets are kept in their courſes; yet he gave the beſt directions poſſible for ſuch as might be inclined to carry on the work; and furniſhed matter abundantly enough to animate them to the purſuit. He has, indeed, hereby opened a way of paſſing from optics to an entire ſyſtem of phyſics; and, if we look upon his queries, as containing the hiſtory of a great man's firſt thoughts, even in that view they muſt be entertaining and curious.

He was very anxious that his true meaning in them ſhould be rightly underſtood; which was, to furniſh ſufficient motives for making farther enquiries; but, in the mean time, not to determine any thing: and, when Dr. Friend publiſhed his Lectures in Chymiſtry, a few years after, in explaining the phænomena of chymical experiments, aſſumed the attraction for a principle, which in the queries was only ſtarted as a conjecture, our author complained of it as an injury done to him. Upon the ſame account it was, that in the advertiſement preſixed to the Optics, he expreſſed a deſire that his book might not be tranſlated into Latin without his conſent; and, when Dr. Clarke, who, to prevent others, immediately undertook it, with his approbation, preſented

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the manuſcript to him, finding herein his ſenſe accurately expreſſed in elegant language, he was ſo much pleaſed with it, that he gave him 500 l. or 100 l. for each of his children.

Dr. Clarke's tranſlation was printed at London, in 1706, 4to, and our author printing a ſecond edition of this book, with improvements, there, in 1718, 8vo, the ſecond edition of Dr. Clarke's tranſlation was likewiſe publiſhed in 1719, 4to. Mr. Peter Coſte tranſlated it into French from the ſecond edition.

The firſt edition of the Optics was accompanied with his Quadrature of Curves by his new analyſis; to which he ſubjoined, An Enumeration of the Lines of the Third Order: both contained under the following title, Tractatus duo de Speciebus & Magnitudine Figurarum Curvilinearum. This was the firſt appearance in print of his Method of Fluxions. It was apparently done upon the plan of his original intention in 1671, as has been mentioned. He declined to publiſh it then on account of a controverſy, and it unluckily proved the occaſion of drawing him into another now.

In 1705, queen Anne, in conſideration of his extraordinary merit, conferred the honour of knighthood upon him.

In 1707, Mr. Whiſton, by our author's permiſſion, publiſhed his Algebraical Lectures under this title: Arithmetica Univerſalis, ſive de Compoſitione & Reſolutione Arithmeticæ Liber; and it was put into Engliſh by Mr. Ralphſon from this edition.

Sir Iſaac printed a ſecond edition, with improvements, under the care of Mr. Machin, profeſſor of aſtronomy at Greſham-college, and ſecretary to the royal-ſociety.

This work was another ſpecimen of the vaſt depth of our author's genius. Dr. Pemberton tells us, that he called this treatiſe by the name of Univerſal Arithmetic, in oppoſition to the injudicious title of Geometry, which Des Cartes had given to the treatiſe; wherein he ſhews how the geometer may aſſiſt his invention by ſuch kind of computations.

Mr. s'Graveſande obſerves, that the ableſt mathematicians of the laſt age did not diſdain to write notes on the Geometry of Des Cartes; "and ſurely," continues he, "Sir Iſaac Newton's Arithmetic no leſs deſerves that honour: and, to excite ſome ſkilful hands to undertake that work, as well as to ſhew the neceſſity of it, he gave a ſpecimen in the explication of two paſſages, which, however, are not the moſt difficult in that book. Accordingly, Mr. Maclaurin dying in the year 1745, left a treatiſe which was deſigned for a commentary upon it.

In 1711, our author's Analyſis per Quantitatum Series, Fluxiones & Differentias cum Enumeratione Linearum Tertii Ordinis, was publiſhed at London, in 4to, by William Jones, eſq. F. R. S. who met with a copy of the firſt of theſe pieces among the papers of Mr. John Collins, to whom, as already mentioned

tioned, it had been communicated by Dr. Barrow in 1669. But the invention of approximating per differentias, or the method of drawing a geometrical curve of the parabolic kind through any number of points, though found out by our author long before, and reckoned by himſelf to be one of his rareſt diſcoveries, yet had not been communicated by him till this time.

The publication of this book was occaſioned by the diſpute about the invention of the method of fluxions, which likewiſe gave birth to the following work, that was undertaken by the conſent of Sir Iſaac, and printed the next year at London, in 4to, containing a collection of ſeveral letters by Sir Iſaac and others, in relation to that controverſy, under this title: Commercium Epiſtolicum D. Johannis Collins & aliorum, de Analyſi promotâ, juſſu Societatis Regiæ in lucem editum.

In 1714, Mr. Humphrey Ditton and Mr. William Whiſton, having propoſed and publiſhed, a new method of diſcovering the longitude at ſea by ſignals; it was laid before the houſe of commons to procure their encouragement: upon which a committee was appointed to take the matter into conſideration; who, ſending to Sir Iſaac Newton for his opinion, he immediately drew up the following paper, which was delivered to the committee on the ſecond of June.

" For determining the Longitude at ſea there have been ſeveral projects, true in theory but difficult to execute.

" I. One is by a watch to keep time exactly; but, by reaſon of the motion of a ſhip, the variation of heat and cold, wet or dry, and the difference of gravity in different latitudes, ſuch a watch hath not yet been made.

" II. Another is by the eclipſes of Jupiter's ſatellites; but, by reaſon of the length of teleſcopes neceſſary to obſerve them, and the motion of a ſhip at ſea, thoſe eclipſes cannot yet be there obſerved.

" III. A third is, by the place of the moon; but her theory is not yet exact enough for that purpoſe; it is exact enough to determine the longitude within two or three degrees, but not within a degree.

" IV. A fourth is Mr. Ditton's project; and this is rather for keeping an account of the Longitude at ſea, than for finding it if at any time it ſhould be loſt, as it may eaſily be in cloudy weather. How far this is practicable, and with what charge, they that are ſkilled in ſea-affairs are beſt able to judge. In ſailing by this method, when ever they are to paſs over very deep ſeas, they muſt ſail due eaſt or weſt; they muſt firſt ſail into the latitude of the next place to which they are going beyond it, and then keep due eaſt or weſt till they come at that place.

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"In the three firſt ways there muſt be a watch regulated by a ſpring, and rectified every viſible ſun-riſe and ſun-ſet, to tell the hour of the day or night. In the fourth way, ſuch a watch is not neceſſary. In the firſt way there muſt be two watches, this and the other above-mentioned. In any of the three firſt ways it may be of ſervice to find the Longitude within a degree, and of much more ſervice to find it within forty minutes, or half a degree if it may; and the ſucceſs may deſerve rewards accordingly.

"In the fourth way, it is eaſier to enable ſeamen to know their diſtance and bearing from the ſhore, forty, ſixty, or eighty miles off, than to croſs the ſeas; and ſome part of the reward may be given, when the firſt is performed on the coaſt of Great-Britain, for the ſafety of ſhips coming home; and the reſt when ſeamen ſhall be enabled to ſail to an aſſigned remote harbour without loſing their Longitude, if it may be."

Upon this opinion the houſe of commons threw aſide the petition.

In 1715, Mr. Leibnitz intending to bring the world more eaſily into a belief, that Sir Iſaac had taken the method of fluxions from his differential method; thought to foil his mathematical ſkill by the famous problem of the trajectories, which he therefore propoſed to the Engliſh by way of challenge. But the ſolution of this, though it was the moſt difficult

cult propoſition his antagoniſt could think of, after a great deal of ſtudy, and, indeed, might paſs for a conſiderable performance in another, yet was it hardly any more than an amuſement to Sir Iſaac. He received the problem at four o'clock in the evening, as he was returning from the Mint; and, though he was extremely fatigued with buſineſs, yet he finiſhed the ſolution of it before he went to bed.

As Mr. Leibnitz was privy-counſellor of juſtice to the elector of Hanover, when that prince was raiſed to the Britiſh throne, Sir Iſaac came to be taken particular notice of at court; and it was for the immediate ſatisfaction of king George I. that he was prevailed with to put the laſt hand to the diſpute about the invention of fluxions.

In this court, the princeſs of Wales, afterwards queen-conſort to his late majeſty, king George II. happened to have a curioſity, which led her particularly to look into philoſophical enquiries. No ſooner, therefore, was ſhe informed of our a thor's firmneſs to the houſe of Hanover, than ſhe engaged his converſation, which preſently endeared him to her. Here ſhe found, in every difficulty, that full ſatisfaction which ſhe had in vain ſought for elſewhere; and her highneſs was often heard to declare in public, that ſhe thought herſelf happy in coming into the world at a juncture of time which put it in her power to converſe with him.

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Amongſt other things, Sir Iſaac one day acquainted her highneſs with his thoughts upon ſome points of chronology, and communicated to her what he had formerly wrote purely for his own amuſement upon that ſubject. But the plan appeared to be ſo unexpectedly new and ingenious, that ſhe could not be ſatisfied till he promiſed her to compleat a work ſhe found ſo happily begun.

Not long after, about the year 1718, the princeſs begged ſhe might have a copy of theſe papers. Sir Iſaac repreſented to her highneſs that they lay very confuſed; and, beſides, what he had written therein was imperfect; but, in a few days, he could draw up an abſtract thereof, if it might be kept ſecret. Some time after he had done this and preſented it, ſhe deſired that Signior Conti, a Venetian nobleman, then in England, might have a copy of it. This was a requeſt which could not be denied, eſpecially as the condition of ſecreſy was readily promiſed.

Notwithſtanding this promiſe, the abbé, who, during his ſtay in England, had always affected to ſhew a particular friendſhip for Sir Iſaac, no ſooner got croſs the water into France but he diſperſed copies of it; got an antiquary to tranſlate it into French; and, moreover, to write a confutation of it. This was printed at Paris in 1725; after which, a copy of the tranſlation only, without the remarks, under this title, Abregé de Chronologie de M. le Chevalier

Chevalier Newton, fait par lui mêſme & traduit ſur le manuſcript Anglois, was delivered, as a preſent, from the bookſeller that printed it to our author, in order to obtain his conſent to the publication; which, though expreſly denied by him, yet the whole was publiſhed not long after in the ſame year.

Upon this, Sir Iſaac publiſhed, in the Philoſophical Tranſactions, No. 386, vol. xxxiv. p. 315, Remarks upon the Obſervations made upon a Chronological Index of Sir Iſaac Newton, tranſlated into French by the obſervator, and publiſhed at Paris.

Some few years before this, in the eightieth year of his age, our author was ſeized with an incontinence of urine, thought to proceed from the ſtone in the bladder, and judged to be incurable: however, by the help of a ſtrict regimen, and other precautions, which till then he never had occaſion for, he procured great intervals of eaſe during the five remaining years of his life; yet he was not free from ſome ſevere paroxyſms, which even occaſioned large drops of ſweat to run down his face.

In theſe circumſtances, he never was ſeen to utter the leaſt complaint, nor expreſs the leaſt impatience; and, as ſoon as he had a moment's eaſe, he would ſmile and talk with his uſual chearfulneſs. Till this time he had always read and writ ſeveral hours in a day, but he was now obliged to rely upon Mr. Conduit for the diſcharge of his office in the Mint.

On

On Saturday morning, March 18, 1726-7, he read the news-papers, and diſcourſed a long time with Dr. Mead, his phyſician, having then the perfect uſe of all his ſenſes and his underſtanding; but that night he entirely loſt them all; and not recovering them after, he died on the Monday following, which was the twentieth of March, in the eighty-fifth year of his age.

His body lay in ſtate in the Jeruſalem-chamber, and, on the twenty-eighth of March, was conveyed into Weſtminſter-abbey, the lord-chancellor, the dukes of Montroſe and Roxburgh, and the earls of Pembroke, Suſſex, and Macclesfield holding up the pall. The corpſe was interred juſt at the entrance into the choir, on the left hand, where a rich monument is erected to his memory, with a ſuitable inſcription upon it, which well deſerves a place here, and is as follows:

H. S. E.
Iſaacus Newton, Eques Auratus,
Qui animi vi prope divina
Planetarum motas, figuras,
Cometarum ſemitas, Oceanique Æſtus,
Sua matheſi facem præferente,
Primus demonſtravit.
Radiorum lucis diſſimilitudines,
Colorumque inde naſcentium proprietates,
Quas nemo antea vel ſuſpicatus erat, prevestigavit.

Naturæ

Naturæ, Antiquitatis, S. Scripturæ,
Sedulus, ſagax, fidus interpres,
Dei Opt. Max. majeſtatem philoſophia aſſeruit,
Evangelii ſimplicitatem moribus expreſſit.

Sibi gratulentur mortales, tale tantumque exitiſſe

HUMANI GENERIS DECUS.

Natus xxv. Decemb. MDCXLII. Obiit. xx. March, MDCCXXVI.

As to his perſon, he was of a middling ſtature, and ſomewhat inclined to be fat in the latter part of his life. His countenance was pleaſing and venerable at the ſame time, eſpecially when he took off his peruke, and ſhewed his white hair, which was pretty thick. He loſt but one tooth, and never made uſe of ſpectacles during his whole life; which, perhaps, might be the ground for Mr. Fontenelle's ſaying, in a kind of panegyric, that he had a very lively and piercing eye. For biſhop Atterbury, who ſeems to have obſerved it more critically, aſſures us, that,

"This did not belong to him, at leaſt not for twenty years paſt, about which time," ſays the biſhop, "I became acquainted with him. Indeed, in the whole air of his face and make, there was nothing of that penetrating ſagacity which appears in his compoſitions; he had ſomething rather languid in his look and manner,

ner, which did not raiſe any great expectation in thoſe who did not know him."

In viewing the character of his genius, we muſt turn to the nature of his inventions, and the manner in which he opened his way to them. Of theſe we have given an account at the ſeveral ſtages of his life when the diſcoveries were made by him. The mark that ſeems moſt of all to diſtinguiſh it is this, That he himſelf was the trueſt judge, and made the juſteſt eſtimation of it.

One day, when one of his friends had ſaid ſome handſome things of his extraordinary talents, Sir Iſaac, in an eaſy and unaffected way aſſured him, that, for his own part, he was ſenſible, that, whatever he had done worth notice, was owing to a patience of thought, rather than any extraordinary ſagacity which he was endowed with above other men. "I keep the ſubject conſtantly before, and wait till the firſt dawnings open ſlowly, by little and little, into a full and clear light." And hence we are able to give a very natural account of that unuſual kind of horror which he had for all diſputes upon theſe points; a ſteady, unbroken attention was his peculiar felicity; he knew it, and he knew the value of it.

In ſuch a ſituation of mind, controverſy muſt needs be looked upon as his bane. However, he was at a great diſtance from being ſteeped in philoſophy: on the contrary, he could

could lay aſide his thoughts, though engaged in the moſt intricate reſearches, when his other affairs required his attendance; and, as ſoon as he had leiſure, reſume the ſubject at the point where he left off. This he ſeems to have done, not ſo much by any extraordinary ſtrength of memory, as by the force of his inventive faculty, to which every thing opened itſelf again with eaſe, if nothing intervened to ruffle him.

The readineſs of his invention made him not think of putting his memory much to the trial; but this was the offspring of a vigorous intenſeneſs of thought, out of which he was but a common man. He ſpent, therefore, the prime of his age in theſe abſtruſe reſearches, when his ſituation in a college gave him leiſure, and even while ſtudy was his proper profeſſion: but, as ſoon as he was removed to the Mint, he applied himſelf chiefly to the buſineſs of that office; and ſo far quitted mathematics and philoſophy, as not to engage in any new purſuits of either kind afterwards.

Dr. Pemberton tells us, that he found Sir Iſaac had read fewer of the modern mathematicians than one could have expected; but his own prodigious invention readily ſupplied him with what he might have occaſion for in any ſubject he undertook. He often cenſured the handling geometrical ſubjects by algebraic calculations; and frequently praiſed Sluſius, Barrow, and Huygens, for not being influenced by the bad taſte which then began to prevail.

He

He uſed to commend the laudable attempt of Hugo de Omerique, to reſtore the antient analyſis, and very much eſteemed Apollonius's book De Sectione Rationis, for giving us a clearer notion of that analyſis than we had before. He particularly recommended Huygens's ſtile and manner, as being, he thought, the moſt elegant of any mathematical writer of modern times, and the moſt juſt imitator of the antients; of whoſe taſte and form of demonſtration Sir Iſaac always profeſſed himſelf a great admirer.

Dr. Pemberton likewiſe obſerves, that his memory, indeed, was much decayed in the laſt years of his life; yet the common diſcourſe, that he did not then underſtand his own works, was entirely groundleſs. This opinion might perhaps ariſe from his not being always ready to ſpeak on theſe ſubjects when it might be expected he ſhould. But this the doctor imputes to an abſence commonly ſeen in great geniuſes.

"Inventors," ſays he, "ſeem to treaſure up in their minds what they have found out, after another manner than thoſe do the ſame things who have not this inventive faculty. The former, when they have occaſion to produce their knowledge, are obliged, in ſome meaſure, immediately to inveſtigate part of what they want; for this, as they are not equally fit at all times, ſo it has often happened, that ſuch as retain things chiefly by means of a very

very ſtrong memory, have appeared off hand more expert than even the diſcoverers themſelves."

Add to this, what, in regard to ſtrict truth, muſt not be ſuppreſſed, that the behaviour of Mr. Leibnitz particularly, as well as of the Abbé Conti, not to mention ſome others, had given that caution which was innate to him ſuch a reſerve, as ſeemed to border upon the ſuſpicious. However, this reſerve, no doubt, was at ſome of theſe times the genuine effect of his native modeſty; which, in paſſing to contemplate the character of his mind, appears to ſtand foremoſt in his compoſition, and was, in truth, greater than can eaſily be imagined, or will be readily believed; yet it always continued ſo, without any alteration, tho' the whole world, ſays Mr. de Fontenelle, conſpired againſt it.

In his diſpute with Mr. Leibnitz, he even ſhewed a great meekneſs of diſpoſition; however, he was very far from being inſenſible, both of the injurious preſumption and mean chicanery of his envious competitor; and undoubtedly took the beſt method of foiling him, by refuſing to feed his vanity with a verbal conteſt, but ſubduing his inſolence with inflexible facts.

When he was twenty-ſeven years of age, he wrote a letter to a young gentleman who was entering upon his travels; where, in giving rules for his friend's conduct, he has in ſome meaſure

meaſure deſcribed his own. This young gentleman was Francis Aſton, eſq. and the letter he ſent him was as follows.

" Trinity-college, Cambridge,
May 18, 1669.

" SIR,

" SINCE in your letter you give me ſo much liberty of ſending my judgment about what may be to your advantage in travelling, I ſhall do it more freely than perhaps otherwiſe would have been decent. Firſt, then, I will lay down ſome general rules; moſt of which, I believe, you have conſidered already; but, if any of them be new to you, they may excuſe the reſt; if none at all, yet is my puniſhment more in writing than yours in reading.

" When you come into any freſh company,

" I. Obſerve their humours.

" II. Secondly, ſuit your own carriage thereto; by which inſinuation you will make their converſe more free and open.

" III Let your diſcourſe be more in queries and doubtings, than peremptory aſſertions or diſputings; it being much the deſign of travellers to learn, not to teach. Beſides, it will perſuade your acquaintance that you have the greater eſteem of them, and ſo make them more ready to communicate what they know to you; whereas, nothing ſooner occaſions

diſ-

diſreſpect and quarrels than peremptorineſs. You will find little or no advantage in ſeeming wiſer, or much more ignorant, than your company.

" IV. Seldom diſcommend any thing, though never ſo bad; or doe it but moderately, leaſt you bee unexpectedly forced to an unhandſom retraction. It is ſafer to commend any thing more than it deſerves, than to diſcommend a thing ſo much as it deſerves: for commendations meet not ſoe often with oppoſitions, or at leaſt are not uſually ſo ill reſented by men that think otherwiſe, as diſcommendations; and you will inſinuate into mens favour by nothing ſooner than ſeeming to approve and commend what they like; but beware of doing it by a compariſon.

" V. If you bee affronted, it is better, in a forraine country, to paſs it by in ſilence, and with a jeſt, tho' with ſome diſhonour, than to endeavour revenge; for, in the firſt caſe, your credit's ne'er the worſe, when you return into England, or come into other company, that have not heard of the quarrell. But, in the ſecond caſe, you may beare the marks of the quarrell while you live, if you outlive it at all. But, if you find yourſelf unavoidably engaged, 'tis beſt, I think, if you can command your paſſion and language, to keep them pretty evenly, at ſome certain moderate pitch, not much hightning them to exaſperate your adverſary, or provoke his friends, nor letting them grow over much dejected, to

make

make him inſult. In a word, if you can keep reaſon above paſſion, that and watchfulneſſe will bee your beſt defendants. To which purpoſe you may conſider, that, tho' ſuch excuſes as this, 'He provokt mee ſoe much, I could not forbear,' may paſs among friends, yet amongſt ſtrangers they are inſignificant, and only argue a traveller's weaknelſe.

"To theſe I may add ſome general heads for inquirys or obſervations, ſuch as at preſent I can think on. As,

"I. To obſerve the policys, wealth, and ſtate-affairs of nations, ſo far as a ſolitary traveller may conveniently doe.

"II. Their impoſitions upon all ſorts of people, trade, or commoditys, that are remarkable.

"III. Their laws and cuſtoms, how far they differ from ours.

"IV. Their trades and arts, wherein they excell, or come ſhort of us in England.

"V. Such fortifications as you meet with, their faſhion, ſtrength, and advantage, or defence; and other ſuch military affairs as are conſiderable.

"VI. The power and reſpect belonging to their degrees of nobility, or magiſtracy.

"VII. It will not be time miſpent to make a catalogue of the names and excellencys of thoſe men that are moſt wiſe, learned, or eſteemed in any nation.

"VIII. Obſerve the mechaniſme and manner of guiding ſhips.

"Obſerve the products of nature in ſeveral places, eſpecially in mines, with the circumſtances of mining, and of extracting metals, or minerals, out of their oare, and of refining them; and, if you meet with any tranſmutations out of their own ſpecies into another (as out of iron into copper, out of any metall into quickſilver, out of one ſalt into another, or into an inſipid body, &c.) thoſe, above all, will be worth your noting, being the moſt luciferous, and many times luciferous experiments too in philoſophy.

"X. The prices of diet and other things. And,

"XI. The ſtaple commodity of places.

"Theſe generals, ſuch at preſent as I could think of, if they will ſerve for nothing elſe, yet they may aſſiſt you in drawing up a modell to regulate your travells by. As for particulars, theſe that follow are all that I now can think of: viz.

"I. Whether, at Semnitium, in Hungary, (where there are mines of gold, copper, iron, vitriol, antimony, &c.) they change iron into copper by diſſolving it in a vitriolate water, which they find in cavitys of rocks in the the mines, and then melting the ſlimy ſolution in a ſtrong fire, which in the cooling proves copper. The like is ſaid to be done in

other

other places, which I cannot now remember; perhaps too it may be done in Italy; for, about twenty or thirty years agone, there was a certain vitrioll came from thence, called Roman vitrioll, but of a nobler virtue than that which is now called by that name; which vitrioll is not now to be gotten, becauſe, perhaps, they make a greater gain by ſome ſuch trick as turning iron into copper with it, than by ſelling it.

" II. Whether, in Hungary, Sclavonia, Bohemia, near the town of Flia, or at the mountains of Bohemia, near Sileſia, there bee rivers whoſe waters are impregnated with gold; perhaps, the gold being diſſolved by ſome corroſive waters, like aqua regis, and the ſolution carried along with the ſtreame that runs through the mines. And, Whether the practiſe of laying mercury in the rivers till it be tinged with gold, and then ſtraining the mercury through leather that the gold may ſtay behind, be a ſecret yet, or openly practiſed.

" III. There is newly contrived in Holland, a mill to grind glaſſes plane withall, and I think poliſhing them too; perhaps it will be worth while to ſee it.

" IV. There is in Holland, one --- Borry, who ſome years ſince was impriſoned by the pope, in order to have extorted from him ſecrets, as I am told, of great worth, both as to medicine and profit; but he eſcaped into Holland, where they uſually granted him a guard. I think he uſually goes cloathed in

green. Pray inquire what you can of him, and whether his ingenuity be any profit to the Dutch. You may inform yourself, whether the Dutch have any tricks to keep their ships from being all worm-eaten in their voyages to the Indies. Whether pendulum clocks do any service in finding out the longitude, &c.

"I am weary, and I shall not stay to part with a long compliment, only I wish you a good journey, and God be with you.

"Is. Newton.

"Pray let us hear from you in your travells, I have given your two books to Dr. Arrowsmith."

He never talked either of himself or others, nor ever behaved in such a manner, as to give the most malicious censurers the least occasion even to suspect him of vanity. He was candid and affable, and always put himself upon a level with his company. He never thought either his merit or reputation sufficient to excuse him from any of the common offices of social life. No singularities, either natural or affected, distinguished him from other men.

Though he was firmly attached to the church of England, he was averse to the persecution of the nonconformists. He judged of men by their manners; and the true schismatics,

matics, in his opinion, were the vicious and the wicked. Not that he confined his principles to natural religion, for he was thoroughly perſuaded of the truth of revelation; and, amidſt the great variety of books which he had conſtantly before him, that which he ſtudied with the greateſt application was the Bible.

He did not neglect the opportunities of doing good, which the revenues of his patrimony, and a profitable employment, improved by a prudent œconomy, put into his power. When decency upon any occaſion required expence and ſhew, he was magnificent without grudging it, and with a very good grace. At other times, that pomp, which ſeems great to low minds only, was utterly retrenched, and the expence reſerved for better uſes.

He never married, and, perhaps, he never had leiſure to think of it. Being immerſed in profound ſtudies during the prime of his age, and afterwards engaged in an employment of great importance, and even quite taken up with the company which his merit drew to him, he was not ſenſible of any vacancy in life, nor of the want of a companion at home.—He left two and thirty thouſand pounds at his death, but made no will; which Mr. Fontenelle tells us was, becauſe he thought a legacy was no gift.

After Sir Iſaac's death, there were found among his papers ſeveral diſcourſes upon the

ſubjects of Antiquity, Hiſtory, Divinity, Chymiſtry, and Mathematics. ——— Some of theſe have been publiſhed ——— Beſides thoſe already mentioned, in 1727, there appeared a table of the aſſays of foreign coins, drawn up by him, and publiſhed at the end of Dr. Arbuthnot's book on that ſubject. And the next year came abroad his Chronology, under this title: The Chronology of Antient Kingdoms amended; to which is prefixed a Short Chronicle, from the firſt Memory of Things in Europe, to the Conqueſt of Perſia by Alexander the Great. By Sir Iſaac Newton. Dedicated to the Queen by Mr. Conduit.

In the Advertiſement to this work, we are told, That,

"Though the Chronology of Antient Kingdoms amended was writ by the author many years ſince, yet he lately reviſed it, and was actually preparing it for the preſs at the time of his death. But the Short Chronicle was never intended to be made public, and therefore was not ſo lately corrected by him. To this the reader muſt impute it, if he ſhall find any places where the Short Chronicle does not accurately agree with the dates aſſigned in the larger piece.

"The ſixth chapter was not copied out with the other five, which makes it doubtful whether he intended to print it; but being found among his papers, and evidently appearing

ing to be a continuation of the ſame work, and as ſuch abridged in the Short Chronicle, it was thought proper to be added."

Sir Iſaac, ſpeaking of this work, in 1725, ſays, when he lived at Cambridge, he uſed ſometimes to refreſh his memory with Hiſtory and Chronology for a while, when he was weary of other ſtudies. Nevertheleſs, there is diſplayed in this work, the ſame creative genius, if we may be allowed the expreſſion, which informed his other reſearches. Accuſtomed to unravel chaoſes, he has thrown light into the dark and fabulous ages of antiquity, and fixed an uncertain chronology; ſhewing himſelf herein no leſs a maſter in calculating the comparative degrees of moral evidence, than he was in applying the abſolute force of mathematical demonſtration. The chain of his argument is unavoidably ſometimes ſo long, that even tolerable good capacities, in attempting to follow it, have, by dropping ſome of the links, loſt the connection, and thence erroneouſly concluded him miſtaken.

In the piece, as we have it unfiniſhed, there are, perhaps, a very few ſmall errors of little conſequence, which, however, probably would not have eſcaped his laſt reviſal. But he employed his care upon the principal part; and his two main arguments, from aſtronomy and the courſe of nature, will always remain unſhaken monuments of his ſupreme abilities among the beſt judges. All ſorts of readers

muſt find a very agreeable entertainment from his account of the heathen mythology, of the origin and progreſs of the arts and ſciences, and a variety of curious obſervations of ſeveral kinds, which he has interſperſed throughout the whole work. The generous and good-natured mind, in particular, muſt needs be pleaſed to find him loſing no opportunity of inſtilling thoſe principles of virtue and humanity, which, by his conduct and writings, appear to have been always uppermoſt in his heart.

He ſeverely condemns all kind of oppreſſion and every kind of cruelty even to brute beaſts; he inculcates mercy, charity, and the indiſpenſible duty of doing good, with the greateſt warmth; and ſhews, that an abhorrence of idolatry and perſecution was one of the earlieſt laws of the divine legiſlator; that in theſe things conſiſted the morality of the firſt ages, the primitive religion both of Jews and Chriſtians; and that theſe ought to be the ſtanding religion of all nations, they being both for the honour of God and the good of ſociety.

This treatiſe muſt likewiſe be of conſiderable uſe to the divine, as it ſets the connection of ſacred and prophane hiſtory in a new and clearer light than before, and furniſhes him with many illuſtrations of ſeveral texts of ſcripture not to be found in the moſt celebrated commentators.

After this, there came out his Obſervations on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apoca-

lypſe

lypſe of St. John. London, 1733, quarto. Though this appears to be a very unfiniſhed piece, yet there are ſeen ſome ſtrokes in it which diſcover the hand of its great maſter. Among other things, he has ſhewn the exact duration of our Saviour's miniſtry upon earth, by a ſtrict demonſtration:—A difficulty which had mocked the efforts of the beſt wits before him.

In 1734, Dr. Berkley, biſhop of Cloyne, in Ireland, in a piece intitled The Analyſt, attacked his method of Fluxions, as being obſcure and unintelligible; ſince the doctrine of moments, upon which it was founded, neceſſarily involved a notion of infinity, whereof we can form no comprehenſible or adequate idea; and therefore ought to be excluded from all geometrical diſquiſitions. This gave riſe to a controverſy, which occaſioned the publication of our author's Method of Fluxions and Analyſis by Infinite Series.

The treatiſe being written in Latin was tranſlated into Engliſh, and printed in 1736, 4to. with a perpetual commentary by Mr. John Colſon, ſince profeſſor of mathematics at Cambridge; wherein, amone other things, he inſerted A Defence of the Method againſt the Objections of Dr. Berkley. The taſk, indeed, was not difficult; Sir Iſaac was too clear-ſighted not to perceive ſuch objections, and accordingly had fully obviated them before, (viz. in ſchol. to ſect. 1. of his Principia, and lemma 2. B. 11.) ſo much to the ſatisfaction

of every intelligent and unprejudiced reader, that the great duſt which had been raiſed about the whole of his doctrine, muſt be owing, as has been obſerved, either to weakneſs or ſome worſe principle.

In 1737, there was printed an Engliſh tranſlation of A Latin Diſſertation upon the Sacred Cubit of the Jews; written by Sir Iſaac. It was found ſubjoined to a work of his not finiſhed, intituled Lexicon Propheticum.

Laſtly, in 1756, there was publiſhed, in 8vo, Four Letters from Sir Iſaac Newton to Dr. Bentley; containing ſome Arguments in Proof of a Deity. Theſe letters were wrote in the year 1692.

Dr. Bentley had been appointed to preach the firſt courſe of ſermons of Mr. Boyle's lecture; and being intent to make the beſt figure he could on that occaſion, he applied to our author for the ſolution of a difficulty which he had met with, in an argument urged by Lucretius, to prove the eternity of the world from an hypotheſis of deriving the frame of it, by mechanical principles, from matter endued with an innate principle of gravity evenly ſpread through the heavens.

The hypotheſis being inconſiſtent with Sir Iſaac's ſyſtem of the world, as laid down and and demonſtrated in the Principia, had been very little conſidered by him in this application. However, he eaſily ſatisfied all the doctor's queries upon the ſubject with great clearneſs; and it may be obſerved, that, as Dr. Bentley

Bentley eſtabliſhed his fame by theſe ſermons at Boyle's lecture, ſo that happineſs was entirely owing to the aſſiſtance, public and private, which he received from Sir Iſaac Newton.

THE LIFE OF

GEORGE BYNG.

GEORGE BYNG, afterwards lord-viſcount Torrington, was deſcended from an antient family in the county of Kent. He was born in the year 1663, and, at the age of fifteen, went a volunteer into the royal navy, in the ſervice of Charles II. having had the king's letter given him at the recommendation of the duke of York.

In 1681, upon the invitation of general Kirk, governor of Tangier, he quitted the ſea, and ſerved as a cadet in the grenadiers of that garriſon, till, on a vacancy, which quickly happened, the general, who was always his warm patron, made him an enſign in his own company, and ſoon after a lieutenant.

In 1684, after the demolition of Tangier, the earl of Dartmouth, general of the ſea and land forces, appointed him lieutenant of the Orford; from which time he kept conſtantly to the ſea-ſervice; but did not throw up his commiſſion as an officer for ſeveral years after.

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Byng Lord Torrington.

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In the year 1685, he went lieutenant of his majeſty's (James II.) ſhip Phœnix to the Eaſt Indies; where engaging and boarding a Ziganian pirate, who maintained a deſperate fight, moſt of thoſe who entered with him were ſlain, himſelf dangerouſly wounded, and the pirate ſinking, he was taken up with ſcarce any remains of life.

In the year 1688, being firſt lieutenant to Sir John Aſhby, in the fleet commanded by the earl of Dartmouth, and fitted out to oppoſe the deſigns of the prince of Orange, he was in a particular manner entruſted and employed in the intrigues then carrying on among the moſt conſiderable officers of the fleet, in favour of that prince; and was the perſon entruſted by them to carry their ſecret aſſurances of obedience to his highneſs; to whom he was privately introduced at Sherbourn, by admiral Ruſſel, afterward earl of Orford. At his return to the fleet, the earl of Dartmouth ſent him, with captain Aylmer and captain Haſtings, to carry a meſſage of ſubmiſſion to the prince at Windſor, who made him captain of the Conſtant Warwick, a fourth rate man of war.

In 1690, he commanded the Hope, a third rate; and was ſecond to Sir George Rooke, in the battle off Beachy.

In the years 1691, and 1692, he was captain of the Royal Oak, and ſerved under admiral Ruſſel, commander in chief of the fleet. Nor were his merits concealed from that great

officer,

officer, for he diſtinguiſhed him in a very remarkable manner, by promoting him to the rank of his firſt captain.

In 1702, a war breaking out, he accepted the command of the Naſſau; and was at the taking and burning the fleet at Vigo.

In the year 1703, he was made rear-admiral of the red by queen Anne; and ſerved in the Mediterranean fleet commanded by Sir Cloudeſly Shovel; who detached him with a ſquadron of five men of war to Algiers, where he renewed the peace with that government. In his return home, he was in great danger of being loſt in the great ſtorm which overtook him in the channel.

In 1704, he ſerved in the grand fleet ſent into the Mediterranean, under the command of Sir Cloudeſly Shovel, in ſearch of the French fleet; and it was he who commanded the ſquadron that attacked and cannonaded Gibraltar; and, by landing the ſeamen, whoſe valour was on this occaſion remarkably diſtinguiſhed, the place capitulated the third day. He was in the battle off Malaga, which followed ſoon after; and, for his behaviour in that action, her majeſty conferred on him the order of knighthood.

Towards the latter end of this year, the French having two ſtrong ſquadrons in the Soundings, beſides great numbers of privateers, which greatly annoyed our trade, Sir George Byng ſailed the latter end of January from Plymouth, with a ſquadron of twelve

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men of war, and a large fleet of merchantmen; and, after ſeeing the latter ſafely out of the Channel, he divided his ſquadron to ſuch advantage, that he took twelve of their largeſt privateers, in about two months, together with the Thetis, a French man of war of forty guns, and ſeven merchant ſhips, moſt of them richly laden from the Weſt-Indies. This remarkable ſucceſs gave ſuch a blow to the French privateers, that they rarely ventured into the Channel during the remainder of the year.

In the year 1705, he was made vice-admiral of the blue; and, upon the election of a new parliament, was returned one of the burgeſſes for Plymouth; which place he conſtantly after repreſented in parliament till he was created a peer.

In the beginning of the year 1707, Sir George was ordered with a ſquadron to Alicant, with neceſſaries for the army in Spain; and accordingly ſailed on the twentieth of March: but, on his arrival off Cape St. Vincent, he heard the melancholy news of the defeat of our army at the battle of Almanza, under the command of the earl of Galway, who ſent to the admiral to acquaint him with the diſtreſs he was in; and deſired, that whatever he had brought for the uſe of the army might be carried to Tortoſa in Catalonia; to which place his lordſhip intended to retreat; and, that, if poſſible, he would ſave the ſick and wounded men at Denia, Gandia, and Valencia;

cia; where it was intended to embark every thing that could be got together.

This the admiral performed; and, having ſent the ſick and wounded to Tortoſa, and being ſoon after joined by Sir Cloudeſly Shovel, from Liſbon, proceeded together to the coaſt of Italy, with a fleet of forty-three men of war, and fifty tranſports, to ſecond prince Eugene and the duke of Savoy, in the ſiege of Toulon; in which Sir George ſerved in the ſecond poſt under Sir Cloudeſly, and narrowly eſcaped ſhipwreck in his return home, when that great officer was loſt; for the Royal Anne, in which Sir George carried his flag, was within a ſhip's length of the rocks on which Sir Cloudeſly ſtruck; yet was providentially ſaved by his own and his officer's preſence of mind, who, in a minute's time ſet the ſhip's topſails, even when one of the rocks was under her main chains.

In the year 1701, he was made admiral of the blue, and commanded the ſquadron fitted out to oppoſe the invaſion intended to be made in Scotland by the pretender, and a French army from Dunkirk. This ſquadron conſiſted of twenty-four men of war, with which Sir George, and lord Durſley, ſailed from the Downs for the French coaſt, on the twenty-ſeventh of February; and, having anchored in Gravelin-pits, Sir George went on board a ſmall frigate, and ſailed within two miles of the Flemiſh Road, and there learned the number and ſtrength of the enemy's ſhips.

On

On the admiral's anchoring before Gravelin, the French laid aſide their embarkation; but, upon expreſs orders from their court, were obliged to reſume it; and, on the ſixth of March, actually ſailed out of the port of Dunſtirk; but, being taken ſhort by contrary winds, came to anchor on the eighth, and then continued their voyage.

Sir George had been obliged, at the time the French fleet ſailed, to come to an anchor under Dungeneſs; and, in his return to Dunkirk, was informed that the French fleet was ſailed, but whither could not be known; tho' he was perſuaded they were deſigned for Scotland: whereupon it was reſolved, in a council of war, to purſue the enemy to the road of Edinburgh; and, accordingly, having firſt detached rear-admiral Barker, with a ſmall ſquadron to convoy the troops to Oſtend, the admiral proſecuted his expedition with the reſt of the fleet.

On the thirtieth of March, the French were diſcovered in the Firth of Edinburgh; where they made ſignals, but to no purpoſe, and then ſteered a north-eaſt courſe, as if they had intended to have gone to St. Andrews.—Sir George purſued them, and took the Saliſbury, an Engliſh prize, then in their ſervice, with ſeveral perſons of great quality on board; many land and ſea officers in the French ſervice of very great diſtinction; five companies of the regiment of Bern, and all the ſhip's company, conſiſting of three hundred men.

After

After this, Sir George finding it impoſſible to come up with the enemy, returned to Leith, where he continued, till advice was received of the French being returned to Dunkirk.

Before the admiral left Leith Road, the lord-provoſt and magiſtrates of Edinburgh, to ſhew their grateful ſenſe of the important ſervice he had done them, by thus drawing off the French before they had time to land their forces; and thereby preſerving, not only the city of Edinburgh, but even the whole kingdom, from the fatal effects of a rebellion and invaſion, reſolved to preſent him with the freedom of their city, by ſending, in their name, Sir Patrick Johnſon, their late repreſentative in parliament, with an inſtrument called a burgeſs-ticket, incloſed in a gold box, having the arms of the city on the ſide, and theſe words engraven on the cover:

"The lord-provoſt, bailiffs, and town-council of Edinburgh, did preſent theſe letters to burgeoiſe Sir George Byng, admiral of the blue, in gratitude to him for delivering this iſland from a foreign invaſion, and defeating the deſigns of the French fleet at the mouth of the Firth of Edinburgh, the 13th of March, 1708."

One would have imagined, that this remarkable ſucceſs muſt have ſatisfied every body; and, that, after defeating ſo extraordinary

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nary a ſcheme, as this was then allowed to be; and reſtoring public credit, as it were, in an inſtant, there ſhould be an univerſal tribute of applauſe paid to the admiral by all ranks and degrees of people: but ſo far was this from being the caſe, that Sir George Byng had ſcarce ſet his foot in London, that it was whiſpered, that the parliament would enquire into his conduct; which notion had its riſe from a very fooliſh perſuaſion, that, having once had ſight of the enemy's fleet, he might, if he pleaſed, have taken every ſhip of them, as well as the Saliſbury.

The truth was, that the French, having amuſed the Jacobites in Scotland with a propoſal of beſieging Edinburgh-caſtle, Sir George Byng was particularly inſtructed, by all means, to prevent that undertaking, by hindering the French from landing in the neighbourhood. This he effectually did, and, by doing it, anſwered the purpoſe of his expedition.

But te ſame malicious people, who firſt propagated this ſtory, invented alſo another; namely, that Sir George was alſo hindered from taking the French fleet by his ſhips being foul; which actually produced an enquiry in the houſe of commons; and an addreſs to the queen, to direct, that an account might be laid before them of the number of ſhips that went on the expedition with Sir George Byng; and when the ſhips were cleaned: which at laſt, however, ended in this reſolution:

"That

"That the thanks of the houſe be given to the prince, for his great care in ſo expeditiouſly ſetting forth ſo great a number of ſhips; whereby the fleet under Sir George Byng was enabled ſo happily to prevent the intended invaſion."

This was a very wiſe and well concerted meaſure, ſince it fully ſatisfied the world of the falſity of thoſe reports, and at the ſame time gave great ſatisfaction to the queen and her royal conſort the prince of Denmark, who both conceived that his royal highneſs's character was affected, as lord-high-admiral.

About the middle of the ſummer, a reſolution was taken to make a deſcent on, or, at leaſts to alarm, the coaſt of France, by way of retaliation for the affront ſo lately offered us; and Sir George Byng, as admiral; and lord Durſley, as vice-admiral of the blue; were appointed to carry the ſcheme into execution.

Accordingly, Sir George ſailed from Spithead on the twenty-ſeventh of July, with the fleet and tranſports, having the troops on board, intended for a deſcent, commanded by lieutenant-general Earle; and the next day came to an anchor off Deal. The twenty-ninth they ſtood over to the coaſt of Picardy, as well to alarm as to amuſe the enemy, and at the ſame time to be ready for further orders. The firſt of Auguſt the fleet ſailed again, and

and anchored the nex day in the bay of Boulogne, where they made a feint of landing their troops. On the third they ſtood in, pretty near the ſhore, to obſerve the condition of the enemy: and on the fourth they weighed again, but came to an anchor about noon in the bay of Eſtaples. Here a detachment of troops were landed; but the project on ſhore, which this deſcent was to have ſeconded, being laid aſide, an expreſs arrived from England; on which the troops were re-embarked.

In this manner they continued ſeveral days on the coaſt of France, creating the enemy inexpreſſible trouble; and indeed the true deſign of it was only to diſturb the naval armaments on their coaſts, and oblige the French court to march large bodies of men to protect their maritime towns; which neceſſarily occaſioned a diminution of their army in Flanders.

The ſame year, Sir George had the honour of conducting the queen of Portugal to Liſbon; where a commiſſion was ſent him, appointing him admiral of the white; and her Portugueſe majeſty preſented him with her picture ſet with diamonds to a very great value.

In the year 1709, he was commander in chief of the fleet ſtationed in the Mediterranean; during which he attempted the relief of the city and caſtle of Alicant; and at the ſame time meditated a deſign upon Cadiz: nor was it his fault that both did not ſucceed; for he did every thing that could be expected from

from him, in order to render theſe important deſigns ſucceſsful.

After his return from this expedition, in 1710, he was appointed one of the commiſſioners for executing the office of lord high-admiral; in which poſt he continued till ſome time before the queen's death; when, not falling in with the meaſures of theſe times, he was removed; but, on the acceſſion of George I. he was reſtored to that employment; and, in the year 1715, on the breaking out of the rebellion, appointed to command a ſquadron in the Downs; with which he kept ſuch a watchful eye on the French coaſt, and ſeized ſuch a great quantity of arms and ammunition ſhipped there for the pretender's ſervice, that his majeſty, to reward his ſervices, created him a baronet, preſented him with a ring of great value, and gave him other marks of his royal favour.

In the year 1717, he was ſent with a ſquadron into the Baltic, on diſcovering that Charles XII. had formed a deſign of making a deſcent upon England; the particulars of which we think unneceſſary to be here mentioned.

We are now to enter upon the moſt remarkable ſcene of action our admiral was ever concerned in, and which he conducted with equal honour and reputation to himſelf and the Britiſh flag. This was the famous expedition of the Britiſh fleet to Sicily in the year 1718, for

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the protection of the neutrality of Italy, and the defence of the emperor's poſſeſſions againſt the invaſion of the Spaniards, who had the year before ſurprized Sardinia, and had this year landed an army in Sicily.

He ſailed from Spithead about the middle of June, 1718, with twenty ſhips of the line of battle, two fire-ſhips, two bomb-veſſels, an hoſpital-ſhip, and a ſtore-ſhip. This ſquadron arrived, on the firſt of Auguſt, in the bay of Naples, into which the fleet ſtanding with a gentle gale, drawn up in a line of battle, moſt of them capital ſhips, and three of them carrying flags, afforded ſuch a ſpectacle as had never been ſeen in thoſe parts before. The whole city was in a tumult of joy and exultation; the ſhore was crowded with multitudes of ſpectators, and ſuch an infinite number of boats came off, ſome with proviſions and refreſhments, others out of curioſity and admiration, that the bay was covered with them.

The viceroy, count Daun, being ill with the gout, and having ſent his compliments to the admiral, he went on ſhore, attended by the flag-officers and captains in their boats; and was ſaluted at his landing by all the cannon round the city and caſtles; and was conducted to the court through an infinite throng of people, with the greateſt acclamations of joy, and all the honours and ceremonies uſually paid to a viceroy of that kingdom.

Here the admiral entered into a conference with count Daun; from whom he learned, that

that the Spaniſh army, conſiſting of thirty thouſand men, commanded by the marquis de Lede, had landed on the ſecond of July in Sicily, and had ſoon made themſelves maſters of the city and caſtles of Palermo, and of great part of the iſland; that they had taken the town of Meſſina, and were carrying on the ſiege of the citadel, &c.

After the conference, the admiral was ſplendidly entertained at dinner, and then lodged at the palace of the duke de Matalona, which had been magnificently fitted up for his reception.

The next morning they had another conference, on the meaſures to be taken in that conjuncture of affairs; when it was agreed, that the viceroy ſhould ſend two thouſand German foot, in tertans, to Meſſina, to relieve the citadel and fort St. Salvador, under the protection of the Engliſh fleet; which accordingly ſailed on the ſixth of Auguſt from Naples, and arrived on the ninth in ſight of the Foro of Meſſina.

Here the admiral, deſirous of trying every method of negociation, before he proceeded to the extremity of his orders, diſpatched his firſt captain with orders to Meſſina, with a letter to the marquis de Lede; wherein, after acquainting him upon what account he was ſent there, he propoſed a ceſſation of arms for two months, that their reſpective courts might have time to conclude ſuch reſolutions as might reſtore a laſting peace; but added, that, if he was not

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ſo happy as to ſucceed in this offer of his ſervice, he ſhould then be obliged to uſe all his force, to prevent farther attempts to diſturb the dominions his maſter ſtood engaged to defend.

The general returned for anſwer, That he had no powers to treat; and, conſequently, could not agree to a ſuſpenſion of arms, but muſt follow his orders, which directed him to ſeize upon Sicily for his maſter the king of Spain.

According to the beſt accounts the admiral could receive, he was led to conceive, that the Spaniſh fleet was ſailed from Malta, in order to avoid him; and therefore, upon receiving the marquis's anſwer, he immediately weighed, with an intention to come with his ſquadron before Meſſina, in order to encourage and ſupport the garriſon in the citadel: but, as he ſtood about the point of the Faro of Meſſina, he ſaw two Spaniſh ſcouts in the Faro; and being informed at the ſame time, by a felucca, which came from the Calabrian ſhore, that they ſaw from the hills the Spaniſh fleet lying by; the admiral altered his deſign, and, ſending away the German troops to Reggio, under the convoy of two men of war, he ſtood through the Faro with his ſquadron with all the ſail he could, after their ſcouts, imagining they would lead him to their's; which accordingly they did; for, before noon, he had a fair view of their whole fleet lying by, and

drawn into a line of battle; which the admiral followed, and ſoon after came up with.

The conſequence was, that he engaged and entirely ruined them, while captain Watſon did the ſame by the other part of the fleet, which ſtood in for the Sicilian ſhore.

In 1719, Sir George, as ſoon as the whole fleet was joined, diſpatched his eldeſt ſon to England; who arriving at Hampton court in fifteen days, brought thither the agreeable confirmation of what public fame had before reported; namely, the entire defeat of the Spaniſh fleet; and upon which the king had written a letter to the admiral with his own hand.

In the mean time, the admiral proſecuted his affairs with great diligence; procured the emperor's troops free acceſs into the fortreſſes that were ſtill held out in Sicily; brought their Sicilian gallies from Malta; and ſoon after received a letter from the emperor, written with his own hand, accompanied with a picture of his imperial majeſty, ſet round with large diamonds, as a mark of the ſervices which had been rendered by his excellency to the houſe of Auſtria.

Early in the ſpring, the admiral returned to Naples; where he adjuſted every thing with the viceroy and the German general for the reduction of Sicily; in which he acted with ſuch zeal and ſucceſs, that the Imperial army was tranſported into the iſland, and ſo well ſupplied with

with all neceſſaries from the fleet, that it may be truly ſaid, the ſucceſs of that expedition was as much owing to the Engliſh admiral as the German general; and, that the Engliſh fleet did not leſs ſervice than the Imperial army.

It was entirely owing to the admiral's advice, and to his aſſiſtance and ſupplies of cannon, powder, and ball, from his own ſhips, that the Germans retook the city of Meſſina, in the ſummer of the year 1719; after which the admiral landed a body of Engliſh grenadiers, who ſoon made themſelves maſters of the tower of Faro; by which having opened a free paſſage for their ſhips, he came to an anchor in Paradiſe-road. This was a ſtep of great conſequence; for the officers of the Spaniſh men of war, which were in the mole, perceiving this, began to deſpair of getting out to ſea, and unbent their ſails, unrigged their ſhips, and reſolved to wait their fate with that of the citadel. This gave the admiral great ſatisfaction, who now found himſelf at liberty to employ his ſhips in other ſervice, which had for a long while been employed in blocking up that port.

But, while things were in this proſperous ſituation, a diſpute aroſe among the allies about the diſpoſition of the Spaniſh ſhips, when, after the citadel was taken, they ſhould fall of courſe into their hands. This diſpute was happily ended by the admiral's propoſing

to erect a battery, and deſtroy them, as they lay in the baſon; which was done accordingly, and thereby the ruin of Spain completed.

The admiral, in order to ſucceed in the reduction of Sicily, and, at the ſame time, to procure artillery for carrying on the ſiege of the citadel of Meſſina, went over to Naples in Auguſt; and finding that the government was unable to furniſh the military ſtores that were wanting, he generouſly granted the cannon out of the Britiſh prizes; and procured, upon his own credit, and at his own riſque, powder and other ammunition from Genoa; and ſoon after went thither himſelf, in order to haſten the embarkation of the troops intended for Sicily; which was made ſooner than could have been expected, merely by his incredible labour and diligence, and in ſpite of the delays affected by the count (afterwards baſhaw) Bonneval, who was appointed to command them.

Our admiral was received with great honour and reſpect at Genoa. At his arrival, the town ſaluted his flag with twenty-one guns, and his perſon with ten guns and twenty chambers; and the republic ſent off ſix deputies, three of the old and three of the new nobility, to compliment him upon his arrival.

After a ſtay of about three weeks, he ſailed with all the tranſports to Sicily, and arrived before Meſſina on the eighth of October; which ſo elevated the ſpirits of the army, then beſieging the citadel, that, upon the firſt ſight of

of the fleet, they made a vigorous attack upon a half-moon, and carried it. The admiral, repairing aſhore to the general's quarters, was embraced by him, and all the general officers, with the moſt tender marks of affection and gratulation, the whole army being overjoyed to ſee a man who brought them relief and ſucceſs, and every good that attended them.

In ten days after the admiral's arrival at Meſſina, the citadel ſurrendered to the Germans: after which Sir George reimbarked a great part of the army, and landed them upon another part of the iſland; by which means they diſtreſſed the enemy to ſuch a degree, that the marquis de Lede, commander of the Spaniſh forces, propoſed to evacuate the iſland; which the Germans were very deſirous of agreeing to, and ſent to Vienna for inſtructions; but the admiral proteſted againſt it, and declared, that the Spaniſh troops ſhould never be permitted to quit Sicily and return home, till a general peace was concluded; and ſent his eldeſt ſon to Vienna with inſtructions, if the Imperial court liſtened to the propoſal of the Spaniſh general, to declare, that his father could never ſuffer any part of the Spaniſh army to depart out of the iſland, till the king of Spain had acceded to the quadruple alliance, or till he received poſitive inſtructions from England for that purpoſe. In this, Sir George certainly acted as became a Britiſh admiral; who, after having done ſo many ſer-

vices for the Imperialiſts, might ſurely inſiſt on their doing what was juſt in reſpect to us, and holding the Spaniſh troops in the uneaſy ſituation they now were, till they gave ample ſatisfaction to the court of London, as well as to that of Vienna.

After this, the Spaniſh general laid a ſnare to ſeparate the admiral from the Germans, by propoſing an agreement with him for a ſeparate ceſſation of hoſtilities, but without effect. But ſoon after, when the Germans, with the aſſiſtance of the admiral, had begun the ſiege of Palermo, before which the Spaniards lay incamped; and juſt as the two armies were upon the point of engaging, a courier arrived in that lucky inſtant from Spain, with full powers for the Spaniſh general to treat and agree about the evacuation of Sicily and Sardinia, in conſequence of the king of Spain's acceding to the quadruple alliance; upon which, the two armies were drawn off; a ſuſpenſion of arms agreed on; the Germans put into poſſeſſion of Palermo; and the Spaniards embarked for Barcelona.

The admiral, after he had ſettled all affairs in Sicily, ſailed in Auguſt, 1720, to Cagliari, in Sardinia; where he aſſiſted at the conferences of the miniſters and generals of the ſeveral powers concerned; wherein was regulated the manner of ſurrendering the iſland by the Spaniſh viceroy to the emperor, and the ceſſion of the ſame to the duke of Savoy; and, at the

the inſtance of this prince, the admiral did not depart, till he had ſeen the whole fully executed; the Spaniſh troops landed in Spain; and the duke of Savoy put into quiet poſſeſſion of his new kingdom of Sardinia, in exchange for Sicily, according to the quadruple alliance: in all which affairs the admiral arbitrated ſo equally between them, that even the king of Spain expreſſed his entire ſatisfaction in his conduct to the Britiſh court: and his behaviour was ſo acceptable to the duke of Savoy, that his ſincere acknowledgments to him were accompanied with his picture ſet in diamonds.

Thus ended the war of Sicily, wherein the Britiſh fleet bore ſo illuſtrious a part, that the fate of the iſland was wholly governed by its operations; both agreeing, that the one could not have conquered, nor the other have been ſubdued, without it. Never was any ſervice conducted, in all its parts, with greater zeal, activity, and judgment; nor was ever the Britiſh flag in ſo high reputation and reſpect in thoſe diſtant parts of Europe.

His majeſty, king George I. who had named the admiral for that expedition, uſed to ſay to his miniſters, when they applied for inſtructions to be ſent him for his direction on certain important occaſions, That he would ſend him none, for he knew how to act without any; and, indeed, all the meaſures that he took abroad were ſo exact and juſt, as to

ſquare with the councils and plan of policy at home.

Thus have we given an account of this famous expedition; and, by a bare recital of facts, without further enquiries, ſhewn how well Sir George Byng executed his inſtructions; for in this conſiſts the merit of an admiral, and for which alone he is anſwerable, and not at all for the rectitude of theſe inſtructions. If this be not granted, we muſt never expect to be well ſerved at ſea; ſince the admiral, who takes upon him to interpret his inſtructions, will never want excuſes for his conduct, be it what it will; and, if this be once granted, Sir George Byng muſt be allowed to have done his duty as well as any admiral ever did; for to his conduct it was entirely owing, that Sicily was ſubdued, and his catholic majeſty forced to accept the terms preſcribed him by the quadruple alliance. He it was, that firſt engaged the Germans to ſet foot in that iſland, even after the taking of Meſſina. The cauſe of the emperor being become the cauſe of his maſter, he ſerved the intereſt of that prince with ſuch zeal and fidelity as exhibited a pattern to his own ſubjects. He lived in ſuch harmony with the Imperial viceroys and generals, as has been ſeldom ſeen among fellow-ſubjects united in command; the want of which has proved the ruin of many important expeditions. He was incapable of performing duty in a cold or negligent manner; and, when any

any ſervice was committed to his management, he devoted his whole application to it; nor could any fatigue, or indiſpoſition of body, ever divert or interrupt his attention from any point that required preſent diſpatch. To this it might be in a great meaſure owing, that he was never unfortunate in any undertaking, nor miſcarried in any ſervice intruſted to his direction; for, whoever will trace public or private events to their ſource, will find, except where the immediate finger of Providence is viſible, that what is aſcribed to chance, is generally the effect of negligence or imprudence. He always proceeded upon ſolid principles, and left nothing to fortune that could be accompliſhed by foreſight and application. His firmneſs and plain-dealing to thoſe foreigners who treated with him upon buſineſs, was ſuch, that it contributed greatly to the diſpatch and ſucceſs of his tranſactions with them; for they could depend upon what he ſaid: and, as they ſaw he uſed no arts or chicanes himſelf, and had too diſcerning an eye to ſuffer them to paſs unobſerved in others, they often found it their beſt policy to leave their intereſts in his hands and to his management; being certain of a moſt impartial and punctual performance of whatever he engaged in. His reputation was ſo thoroughly eſtabliſhed in this particular, that, in the frequent diſputes and altercations, that aroſe between the Savoyards and Germans, during the courſe of the war, and be-

tween the latter and the Spaniards at the concluſion of it, he was the common umpire between them; always ſhunning and oppoſing any extravagant or unjuſt demands; and reconciling, as much as poſſible, the violences of war with the rules of honour and juſtice.

After the performing ſo many ſignal ſervices the admiral departed from Italy to attend his majeſty to Hanover; and the king, among many other gracious expreſſions of favour and ſatisfaction, told him, That he had found out the ſecret of obliging his enemies as well as his friends; and, that the court of Spain had mentioned, with great acknowledgments, his fair and friendly behaviour in the proviſion of tranſports, and other neceſſaries, for the embarkation of their troops, and in protecting them from many vexatious oppreſſions that had been attempted. No wonder that a man endowed with ſuch talents, and ſuch a diſpoſition, left behind him in Italy, and other foreign parts, the character of a great ſoldier, an able ſtateſman, and an honeſt man.

During his majeſty's ſtay at Hanover, he began to reward the eminent ſervices of Sir George Byng, by making him treaſurer of the navy, and rear-admiral of Great-Britain; and, on his return to England, one of his moſt honourable privy-council.

In the year 1721, he was created a peer of Great-Britain, by the title of viſcount Torrington, and baron Byng, of Southill, in Devonſhire:

vonſhire: and, in 1725, he was made one of the knights of the Bath.

At his late majeſty's acceſſion to the throne, he was made firſt commiſſioner of the admiralty; in which high ſtation he breathed his laſt, at his houſe in the Admiralty, of an aſthma, in June, 1733, in the ſeventieth year of his age, and was buried at Southill, in Bedfordſhire.

His lordſhip was but of a tender conſtitution, though well ſupplied with ſpirits, which were not ſo conſpicuous in gaiety of converſation, as in activity in all the duties and functions of life or buſineſs, in which he was indefatigable; and, by a continual habit of induſtry, had hardened and inured a body, not naturally ſtrong, to patience and fatigue.

He had made no great proficiency in ſchool-learning, which the early age of going to ſea rarely admits of; but his great diligence, joined with excellent natural parts, and a juſt ſenſe of honour, made him capable of conducting difficult negociations and commiſſions, with proper dignity and addreſs.

During the time he preſided in the Admiralty, he laboured in improving the naval power of this kingdom; in procuring encouragement for ſeamen, who in him loſt a true friend; in promoting the ſcheme for eſtabliſhing a corporation for the relief of widows and children of commiſſion and warrant officers in the royal navy; and in every other ſervice to his country that he was capable of.

He married, in 1692, Margaret, daughter of James Maſter, of Eaſt-Landen, in Kent, eſq. by whom he had eleven ſons and four daughters; but only three of the former, and one of the latter, ſurvived him.

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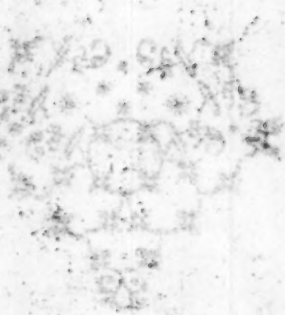

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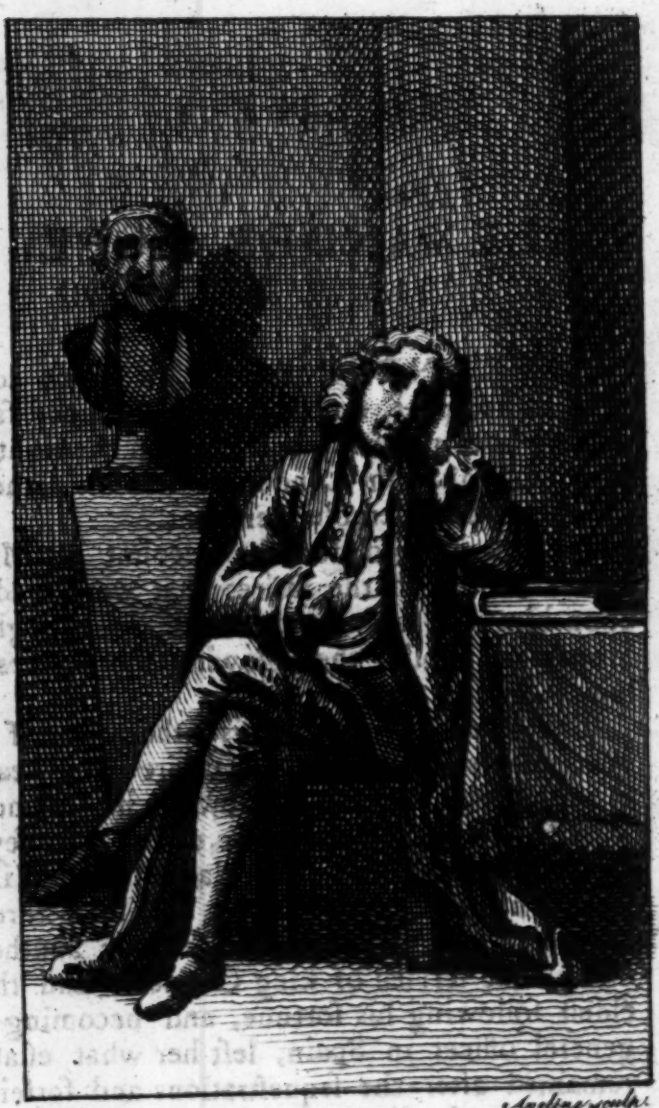

Audinet sculpt.

Alex.r Pope Esq.r

THE LIFE OF

ALEXANDER POPE.

ALEXANDER POPE, a much admired poet, was deſcended of a good family by both parents; and born on the eighth of June, 1988, in London, where his father was then a conſiderable merchant.

We are obliged for the account of Mr. Pope's family to the ſatires that were made upon him; in anſwer to which, he thought proper to publiſh the following ſhort genealogy:

That Alexander Pope, his father, was of a gentleman's family in Oxfordſhire; the head of which was the earl of Downe, in Ireland, whoſe ſole heireſs married the earl of Lindſey. His mother was Editha, the daughter of William Turner, eſq. of York: ſhe had three brothers; one of whom was killed; another died in the ſervice of king Charles I. and the eldeſt following his fortune, and becoming a general officer in Spain, left her what eſtate remained after the ſequeſtrations and forfeitures of her family; which, as well as that of her huſband, was of the Popiſh religion.

He

He was taught to read very early by an aunt, and he learned to write without any aſſiſtance, by copying printed books; which he executed with great neatneſs and exactneſs. He was put, at eight years of age, under the direction of one Taverner, a prieſt, who taught him the rudiments of the Latin and Greek tongues together. He imbibed theſe elements of claſſical learning with the greateſt facility, and, on firſt ſeeing the poets, diſcovered at once, both the peculiar bent of his inclination, and the excellency of his genius.

About this time accidentally meeting with Ogilby's tranſlation of Homer, he was ſo much ſtruck with the force of the ſtory, that, notwithſtanding the deadneſs and inſipidneſs of the verſification, Ogilby became a favourite book. The Ovid of Sandys fell next in his way; and, it is ſaid, that the raptures theſe tranſlations gave him were ſo ſtrong, that he ſpoke of them with pleaſure all his life after.

From his private tutor he was ſent to a popiſh ſeminary at Twyford, near Wincheſter; whence he was removed to ſchool at Hyde-park corner.

He was now about ten years of age, and, being carried ſometimes to the play-houſe, the ſight of thoſe theatrical repreſentations put him upon turning the chief events of Homer into a kind of play, made up of a number of ſpeeches from Ogilby's tranſlation, connected by

by verſes of his own. He perſwaded the upper boys to act this piece; a curioſity which one would have been glad to have ſeen. The maſter's gardener repreſented the character of Ajax, and the actors were dreſſed after the prints of his favourite Ogilby; which indeed make far the beſt part of that book, being deſigned and engraved by artiſts of note.

In the mean time, he was ſo unfortunate as to loſe, under his two laſt maſters, what he had acquired by the firſt. In this condition, at twelve years of age, he retired with his parents to Binfield, in Windſor foreſt, where his father had provided a convenient little box, not far from Oakingham, in Berkſhire; and, at his firſt coming, 'tis ſaid, was put under another prieſt for a few months, but with as little ſucceſs as before; ſo that he reſolved to become his own maſter. This country retreat, however, ſuited his melancholy and reflective temper; and it was about this time that he wrote his Ode on Solitude, which appears as the firſt-fruits of his poetical genius.

It was here too that he firſt peruſed the writings of Waller, of Spenſer, and of Dryden; but, on the firſt ſight of Dryden, he abandoned the reſt, having now found an author whoſe caſt was extremely congenial with his own. After he met with this favourite's works, he was never eaſy till he had ſeen the author; and, for that purpoſe, he procured a friend to bring him to a coffee-houſe where Dry-

Dryden was, only that he might be bleſſed with the ſight of that great poet.

This could not have been long before Mr. Dryden's death, which happened in 1701; ſo that Mr. Pope was never known to him: a misfortune which he laments in the following pathetic words:

"Virgilium tantum vidi."

He never mentioned him afterwards without a kind of rapturous veneration. Thus, for inſtance, having run over the names of his great friends and encouragers, he concludes with the perſon whom he eſteemed above all the reſt, in the following diſtich:

And St. John's ſelf, great Dryden's friend before,
With open arms received one poet more.

His works therefore he ſtudied with equal pleaſure and attention; he placed them before his eyes as a model: in ſhort, he copied not only his harmonious verſification, but the very turns of his periods: and hence it was that he became enabled to give to rhyme all the harmony of which it is capable.

Binfield being near Eaſthamſtead, where Sir William Trumbull then reſided, our young genius was introduced into the acquaintance of that gentleman; who, being ſtruck with admiration

miration at his extraordinary parts, and pleaſed with his good ſenſe, as well as the decency and regularity of his manners, gave him great encouragement, and preſently admitted him to a ſhare of his friendſhip.

In the mean time, maſter Pope was not wanting to himſelf in improving his talents for poetry: at fourteen years old he had compoſed ſeveral elegant pieces that way: at fifteen, he had acquired a ready habit in the two learned languages; and to which he ſoon after added French and Italian.

It is a common obſervation, that ſome ſeeds of vanity and ſelf-conceit are neceſſary ingredients in the compoſition of a poet; accordingly our author was not without a proper ſhare of theſe qualities, and now thought himſelf capable of undertaking an epic poem. In that ſpirit, he ſet about writing his Alcander this year; and the performance, as might be expected, was a glaring proof of his childiſh folly. However, he had either ſenſe or modeſty enough, or both, to keep it in his ſtudy; and in his riper years ſpoke of it with a frankneſs and ingenuity that does more than atone for the forwardneſs of his attempt.

"I confeſs," ſays he, "there was a time when I was in love with myſelf; and my firſt productions were the children of ſelf-love upon innocence. I had made an epic poem and panegyrics upon all the princes, and I thought myſelf

myſelf the greateſt genius that ever was. I cannot but regret theſe delightful viſions of my childhood, which, like the fine colours we ſee when our eyes are ſhut, are vaniſhed for ever."

In the following year, 1704, he entered upon a taſk more ſuitable to his age. This was his Paſtorals, which brought him into the acquaintance of ſome of the moſt eminent wits of that time. He communicated theſe firſt to Mr. Wycherley, who was highly pleaſed with them, and ſent a copy to Mr. Walſh, gentleman of the horſe to queen Anne, and author of ſeveral ingenious pieces, both in proſe and verſe.

This introduced him to the acquaintance of that gentleman, who proved a very ſincere friend to him; and having immediately diſcerned that our poet's chief talent lay not ſo much in ſtriking out new thoughts of his own, as in improving thoſe which he borrowed from the antients, and an eaſy verſification, told him, among other things, that there was one way left open for him to excel his predeceſſors, and that was correctneſs; obſerving, that, though we had ſeveral great poets, yet none of them were correct: he therefore adviſed him to make that his ſtudy.

The advice was not loſt: Mr. Pope received it very gratefully, and obſerved it very diligently, as appears by the ſubſequent letters

ters in this correſpondence; and no doubt the diſtinguiſhing harmony of his numbers was in a great meaſure owing to it.

This year, 1704, he wrote alſo the firſt part of his Windſor-Foreſt, though the whole was not publiſhed till ſeveral years afterwards, in 1710, with a dedication to lord Lanſdowne, whom he mentions as one of his earlieſt acquaintance. Mr. Wycherley was another. To theſe, beſides Bolingbroke and Walſh, he adds Congreve, Garth, Swift, Atterbury, Talbot, Somers, and Sheffield, as perſons with whom he was not only converſant, but beloved, at ſixteen or ſeventeen years of age; an early bard for ſuch acquaintance: and the catalogue might be made yet more illuſtrious, had he not confined it to the time when he wrote the Paſtorals and Windſor-Foreſt.

The circumſtance of our author's writing the firſt part of this poem ſo early as 1704, furniſhes no bad apology for the general fault charged upon it; few images, it is ſaid, are introduced, which are not equally applicable to any place whatſoever. It is true, deſcriptive poetry, of which kind is this piece, was manifeſtly none of the ſhining talents of Pope; but, when it is remembered, that he pitched upon a deſcription of Windſor-Foreſt, then the place of his abode, at ſixteen, an age for which this kind of poetry has the greateſt charms, it may as truly be ſaid, that he could not then be ſenſible which way the chief force of his genius lay; and this may more particularly

ticularly be inſiſted on by all who have taken notice of what our poet hath ſaid of this poem in an epiſtle to Dr. Atterbury,

While pure deſcription held the place of ſenſe.

It is allowed that he breaks out into a true poetical enthuſiaſm more than once, and particularly in the concluſion; and there was indeed a circumſtance which, no doubt, ſtrongly animated his muſe in that part. The peace, afterwards concluded at Utrecht, was this year, 1710, projected by his particular friends Harley and St. John, who were now at the head of the miniſtry. Accordingly, we find the influences and effects of peace, and its conſequence, a diffuſive commerce, marked by ſelect circumſtances, ſuch as are beſt adapted to ſtrike the imagination by lively pictures, the ſelection of which conſtitutes true poetry. At the cloſe of all, there appears a groupe of allegorical perſonages, in the rear of which ſtand the following figures, painted in living colours, with their proper inſignia and attributes.

——— Envy her own ſnakes ſhall feel,
And perſecution mourn her broken wheel;
There faction roar, rebellion bite her chain,
And gaſping furies thirſt for blood in vain.

It is ſaid, that,

"Addiſon

"Addiſon was inexpreſſibly chagrined at this noble concluſion of Windſor-Foreſt, both as a politician and as a poet. As a politician, becauſe it ſo highly celebrated that treaty of peace, which he deemed ſo pernicious to the liberties of Europe; and as a poet, becauſe he was deeply conſcious, that his own Campaigne, that Gazette in rhyme, contained no ſtrokes of ſuch genuine and ſublime poetry as the concluſion before."

No part of our bard's life is more intereſting than that of his conduct in cultivating friendſhips, eſpecially with his brother poets. At the age of eighteen, he was grown ſo high in the eſteem of Wycherley, that he thought him capaple of correcting his poems, (which had been damned) ſo as they might appear again in print. Pope complied with the requeſt, and executed it with equal freedom and judgment. But the faults proved too many for the author of them to be told of; he was old, became jealous, and conſtrued his young maſter's ingenuity, and plain dealing, into want of reſpect. Not only the deſign of publiſhing was dropped, but all correſpondence with the corrector ſuſpended.

This ungenerous reſentment was lively reſented by Pope; and, though Wycherley was prevailed with afterwards, by the mediation of a common friend, to reſume the correſpondence, yet this went no farther than bare complaiſance.

plaiſance. However, ſome time after Mr. Wycherley's death, his poems being republiſhed by ſome mercenary hand, in 1728, our author, the following year, printed ſeveral letters that had paſſed between them, in vindication of Mr. Wycherley's good name, againſt ſome miſconſtructions prefixed to that edition.

Our poet's conduct, throughout this whole trying affair, was greatly above his years; but, young as he was, his talents were now beginning to ripen into full maturity. This appeared conſpicuouſly in his Eſſay on Criticiſm; which, though wrote ſo early as 1708, yet placed him among thoſe of the firſt rank in his art. It is indeed eſteemed a maſterpiece in it's kind, and ſo diſcovered the peculiar turn of his genius. He was not yet twenty years old, ſo that every body ſtood amazed to find ſuch a knowledge of the world, ſuch a maturity of judgment, and ſuch a penetration into human nature, as are there diſplayed; inſomuch that it became a ſubject for the critics to diſplay their profoundeſt ſkill in accounting for it. The greateſt geniuſes in painting, as well as poetry, were generally obſerved, not to have produced any of their maſter-pieces before the age of thirty, or thereabouts; and that Mr. Pope's genius ripened earlier, was owing, it is ſaid, to a happy conjuncture of concurring circumſtances. He was happily ſecured from falling into the debaucheries of women and wine (the too frequent

quent bane of hopeful youth) by the weakneſs and delicacy of his conſtitution, and the bad ſtate of his health. The ſenſual vices were too violent for ſo tender a frame, he never fell into intemperance or diſſipation, which is of the greateſt conſequence in preſerving each faculty of the mind in due vigour. Even his miſſhapen figure is alledged to have been of uſe to him as a writer.

It is an obſervation of lord Bacon, that whoſoever hath any thing fixed in his perſon that induces contempt, hath alſo a perpetual ſpur within to reſcue and deliver himſelf from it. Hence it has been thought not improbable that our poet might be animated by this circumſtance to double his diligence, to make himſelf diſtinguiſhed by the rectitude of his underſtanding, and beautiful turn of mind, as much as he was by the deformity of his body. This remark is thought to receive ſome countenance from our author himſelf in the following lines;

What crops of wit and honeſty appear,
From ſpleen, from obſtinacy, hate, or fear:
See anger, zeal, and fortitude ſupply;
Ev'n avarice, prudence; ſloth, philoſophy;
Nor virtue, male or female, can we name,
But what will grow on pride, or grow on ſhame.

It is certain that he ſtrictly fulfilled the precept of Horace in each particular, Multa tulit fecitque puer, ſudavit & alſit.

It

It was another circumſtance, equally propitious to the ſtudies of Pope, in this early part of his, that he inherited a fortune that was a decent competency, and ſufficient to ſupply the ſmall expences which, both by conſtitution and reflection, he required. This he preſerved from the two moſt deſtructive enemies to a young genius, want and dependance. Nor was the circumſtance of being placed beneath opulence, and an high ſtation, leſs propitious; ſince theſe almoſt unavoidably embarraſs and immerſe the poſſeſſor in the cares, the pleaſures, the indolence, and the diſſipation, that accompany abundance. Thus it is conceived, that theſe external aids, as ſo many auxiliaries, aſſiſting the native inborn ſtrength of our poet's genius, had their ſhare in this triumphant production.

But how triumphant ſoever may be the merit of the Eſſay on Criticiſm, yet it was ſtill ſurpaſſed, in a poetical view, by the Rape of the Lock. The former indeed excelled in the didactic way, for which he was peculiarly formed; a clear head and ſtrong ſenſe were his characteriſtical qualities; his chief force lay in the underſtanding, rather than in the imagination: but it is the creative power of the laſt that conſtitutes the proper characteriſtic of poetry; and therefore it is in the Rape of the Lock that Pope principally appears a poet; ſince in this performance he has diſplayed more imagination than in all his other works put together.

The

The poem took its birth from an incidental quarrel that happened between two noble families, that of lord Petre and Mrs. Fermor, both of our author's acquaintance, and of the ſame religion. His lordſhip, in a party of pleaſure, carried it ſo far as to cut off a favourite lock of the lady's hair. This, tho' done in the way of gallantry, was ſeriouſly reſented, as being indeed a real injury. Hence there preſently grew mutual animoſities, which being ſeen with concern by a common friend to all, that friend requeſted Pope to try the power of his muſe on the occaſion; intimating, that a proper piece of ridicule was the likelieſt means to extinguiſh the riſing flame. Pope readily complied with this friendly propoſal, and, the juncture requiring diſpatch, his firſt deſign was compleated in leſs than a fortnight; which being ſent to the lady, had more than the propoſed effect. Pleaſed to the higheſt degree with the delicacy of the compliment paid to her, ſhe firſt communicated copies of it to her acquaintance, and then prevailed with our author to print it: as he did, though not without the caution of concealing his name to ſo haſty a ſketch. But the univerſal applauſe which the ſketch met with, put him upon enriching it with the machinery of the ſylphs; and in that new dreſs, the two cantoes extended to five, came out the following year, 1712, uſhered by a letter to Mrs. Fermor, to whom he afterwards addreſſed another, which is eſteemed far ſuperior to any of Voiture.

The inſertion of the machinery in proper places, as it is done without the leaſt appearance of being awkardly ſtitched in, ſo it was always eſteemed by Pope himſelf, as an effort of his greateſt ſkill and art as a poet; and I have always eſteemed the letter above-mentioned to Mrs. Fermor, as the moſt engaging effort of his ſkill and art as a letter-writer. But let the reader judge.

" To Mrs. Arabella Fermor, after her marriage.

" Madam,

" YOU are ſenſible, by this time, how much the tenderneſs of one man of merit, is to be preferred to the addreſſes of a thouſand; and by this time the gentleman you have made choice of, is ſenſible, how great is the joy of having all thoſe charms and good qualities, which have pleaſed ſo many, now applied to pleaſe one only. It was but juſt, that the ſame virtues which gave you reputation, ſhould give you happineſs; and I can wiſh you no greater, than, that you may reap it to as high a degree, as ſo much good nature muſt give it to your huſband.

" It may be expected, perhaps, that one who has the title of being a wit, ſhould ſay ſomething more polite upon this occaſion; but I am really more a well-wiſher to your felicity, than a celebrater of your beauty. Beſides, you are now a married woman, and in a fine way

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to be a great many better things than a fine lady; ſuch as, an excellent wife, a faithful friend, a tender parent, and, at laſt, as the conſequence of them all, a ſaint in Heaven. You ought now to hear nothing, but that which is all that you ever deſired to hear, (whatever others have ſpoken to you) I mean truth; and it is with the utmoſt that I aſſure you, no friend you have, can more rejoice in any good that befalls you, is more ſenſibly delighted with the proſpect of your future happineſs, or more unfeignedly deſires a long continuance of it.

"I hope you will think it but juſt, that a man, who will certainly be ſpoken of as your admirer after he is dead, may have the happineſs, while he is living, to be eſteemed,

"Your, &c."

Here Pope appears the man of gallantry, good-nature, and a thorough knowledge of the world. This letter is ſometimes annexed to the poem not injudiciouſly, as rendering the entertainment compleat in the happy marriage of the heroine.

This year he alſo publiſhed his Temple of Fame; having, according to his uſual caution, kept it two years in his ſtudy. That object of the univerſal paſſion was full upon his thoughts at this time; he had been, from the firſt ſetting out, in full ſtretch after it, and ſaw it now within his reach: accordingly, we find him

in high ſpirits, diverting himſelf with the ladies, to one of whom he ſent a copy of his Temple, with an humorous gay epigram, which he introduces in the following words:

"Now I talk of Fame, I ſend you my Temple of Fame, which is juſt come out; but my ſentiments about it you will ſee much better by this epigram.

What's fame with men, by cuſtom of the nation,
Is call'd, in women, only reputation:
About them both why keep we ſuch a pother,
Part you with one, and I'll renounce the other."

A couplet in the ſame taſte had ſlipped into the Rape of the Lock.

Oh! hadſt thou, cruel, been content to ſeize
Hairs leſs in ſight, or any hairs but theſe.

Some of the fair-ſex taking offence, as it is ſaid, to theſe lines, occaſioned the two following; wherein that delicacy is handled very roughly, as being no better than a mere affected piece of prudery.

Who cenſure moſt, more precious hairs would loſe,
To have the Rape recorded by his muſe:

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In a paſſage of the letter which accompanied this epigram, it appears, that he had now begun to tranſlate Homer's Iliad, and made a good progreſs in it; and, in 1713, he gave out propoſals for publiſhing that tranſlation by ſubſcription.

He had been preſſed to this undertaking ſome years before by ſome of his friends, and was now greatly encouraged in the deſign by others. His religious principles diſqualified him from receiving any ſolid teſtimony of his merit, in the uſual way, of a place at court. Common prudence therefore prompted him to make the beſt advantage he could of the reputation he had obtained in his trade, and try to raiſe an independent fortune by it. And the ſucceſs was ſuch, as muſt needs anſwer, if not exceed, his moſt ſanguine expectations; he acquired a conſiderable fortune, by a ſubſcription ſo large, that it does honour to the kingdom. He ſaw all parties and denominations join in it, notwithſtanding the underhand practices of ſome pretended friends, who in vain oppoſed the ſtream. At the head of theſe was found Mr. Addiſon.

Our author had long paid an awful veneration to that rival; the conſciouſneſs of which, ſerved to ſet a keener edge upon his reſentment now. But, though the ſenſe of ſo much treachery and falſhood tingled in every vein, yet he managed it with the niceſt prudence, and at laſt revenged it with a ſatire which does honour to himſelf.

The ſeveral ſteps of his conducting this very critical affair may be ſeen in his letters on this occaſion, to which the reader who has not peruſed them, will thank us for referring him. We ſhall only obſerve, in general, that, among other contemptibly mean artifices made uſe of by Addiſon, to ſuppreſs the riſing merit and fame of his rival; it appears from theſe letters, that he diſcouraged Pope from inſerting the machinery in the Rape of the Lock; that, to hurt him with the Whigs, he induſtriouſly gave it out, that Pope was a Tory and a Jacobite; and ſaid that he had a hand in writing the Examiners. That Addiſon himſelf tranſlated the firſt book of Homer's Iliad, publiſhed under Tickell's name; which he declared, after Pope's was printed, was ſtill the beſt that had ever been done in any language. And, laſt of all, he privately encouraged Gildon to abuſe Pope in a virulent pamphlet, and gave him ten guineas for the performance. In ſhort, this was the moſt dangerous attack that Pope ever experienced. How much then does it raiſe the character of his parts and prudence, that he was able abſolutely to defeat it, and even to break theſe darts, which envy and malignity had forged againſt him, upon the head of the forger.

Thus, with admirable temper and ſpirit, he preſerved his dignity; and, keeping his mind attentive to every means that might render his tranſlation more perfect, he took a journey, a little before the death of queen Anne, to Oxford;

ford; to conſult ſome books in the Bodleian and other libraries in that univerſity; and the firſt part of his tranſlation was publiſhed the following year.

This gave great ſatisfaction, ſo that his finances were now put in ſuch a flouriſhing ſtate, that he reſolved to place himſelf nearer his friends in the capital. In that view, the ſmall affair at Binfield being ſold, he purchaſed a houſe at Twickenham, whither he removed with his father and mother before the expiration of this year, 1715. He calls this one of the grand æras of his days; and the taſte he diſplayed in improving the ſeat, became the general vogue.

While he was employed in this delightful work, he could not forbear doubling the pleaſure he took in it by communicating it to his friends.

"The young ladies," ſays he, in a letter to Mr. Blount, "may be aſſured, that I make nothing new in my gardens, without wiſhing to ſee them print their fairy ſteps in every corner of them. I have put the laſt hand to my works of this kind, in happily finiſhing the ſubterraneous way" (from his houſe to his garden, under the high-road which ſeparated them) "and grotto. I there found a ſpring of the cleareſt water, which falls in a perpetual rill, that echoes thro' the cavern day and night. From the river Thames you ſee thro'

my arch, up a walk of the wilderneſs, to a kind of open temple, wholly compoſed of ſhells, in the ruſtic manner; and from that diſtance, under the temple you look down thro' a ſloping arcade of trees, and ſee ſails on the river ſuddenly appearing and vaniſhing as through a perſpective glaſs. When you ſhut the door of this grotto, it becomes, on the inſtant, from a luminous room, a camera obſcura: on the wall of which all the objects of the river, hills, woods, and boats, are forming a moving picture in their viſible radiations; and when you have a mind to light it up, it affords you a very different ſcene. It is finiſhed with ſhells, interſperſed with pieces of looking-glaſs in angular forms; and in the cieling is a ſtar of the ſame materials; at which, when a lamp of an orbicular figure, of thin alabaſter, is hung in the middle, a thouſand pointed rays glitter and are reflected over the place. There are connected to this grotto, by a narrower paſſage, two porches, one towards the river, of ſmooth ſtones, full of light and open; the other towards the garden, ſhadowed with trees, and rough with ſhells, flints, and iron ores. The bottom is paved with ſimple pebble, as is alſo the adjoining walk up the wilderneſs to the temple, in the natural taſte, agreeing not ill with the little dripping murmur and the aquatic idea of the whole place. It wants nothing to complete it but a good ſtatue, with an inſcription like that beau-

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teous pictureſque one, which you know I am ſo fond of.

Hujus nympha loci, ſacri cuſtodia fontis,
Dormio, dum blandæ ſentio murmur aquæ:
Parce meum, quiſquis tangis cava marmora, ſomnum
Rumpere; ſeu bibas, ſive lavere, tace.

Nymph of the grott, theſe ſacred ſprings I keep,
And to the murmur of theſe waters ſleep.
Ah! ſpare my ſlumbers, gently tread the cave,
And drink in ſilence, or in ſilence lave.

"You'll think I have been very poetical in this deſcription, but 'tis pretty nearly the truth."

This letter was wrote in 1725: he afterwards wrote a poem upon it in a peculiar caſt and kind: and Mr. Warburton informs us, that the improving this grotto was the favourite amuſement of his declining years; ſo that, not long before his death, by enlarging and incruſting it about with a vaſt number of ores and minerals of the richeſt and rareſt kinds, he had made it one of the moſt elegant and romantic retirements that is any where to be ſeen.

"And," adds that writer, "the beauty of his poetic genius, in the diſpoſition and orna-

ments of thoſe romantic materials, appeared to as much advantage as in any of his beſt contrived poems."

His father ſurvived this removal only two years, dying ſuddenly, after a very healthy life, at the age of ſeventy-five. He was buried by his ſon at Twickenham, who erected a handſome monument to his memory, with an inſcription celebrating his innocence, probity, and piety. As he was a Papiſt, he could not purchaſe, nor put his money to intereſt on real ſecurity; and, as he adhered to the intereſt of king James, he made it a point of conſcience, not to lend it to the new government; ſo that, though he was worth near twenty thouſand pounds, when he left off buſineſs, from the ſame principles, at the revolution; yet afterwards living upon the ſtock, he left our poet to the management of ſo narrow a fortune, that any one falſe ſtep would have been fatal.

This rigidneſs of the old gentleman's jacobite principles betrays an uncommon degree of bigotted weakneſs, which it was the ſon's care, as much as poſſible, to keep out of ſight. This was a part of prudence, at well as piety, and we find him throwing a veil over it more than once.

For right hereditary tax'd and fin'd,
He ſtuck to poverty with peace of mind.

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———What fortune, pray? Their own;
And better got than Beſtia's from the throne.
Born to no pride, inheriting no ſtrife,
Nor marrying diſcord in a noble wife:
Stranger to civil and religious rage,
The good man walk'd innocuous thro' his age:
No courts he ſaw, no ſuits would ever try;
Nor dar'd an oath, nor hazarded a lye.
Unlearn'd, he knew no ſchool-man's ſubtle art;
No language, but the language of the heart:
By nature honeſt, by experience wiſe;
Healthy by temperance and by exerciſe.
His life, tho' long, to ſickneſs paſt unknown;
His death was inſtant, and without a groan.

The old gentleman had ſometimes recommended to our author, in his earlieſt years, the ſtudy of phyſic, as the beſt means of repairing that waſte of the ſubſtance which from his own principles was rendered unavoidable. But this muſt have gone no farther than a ſimple propoſal, ſince we are aſſured by the ſon that he broke no duty, nor diſobeyed either parent, in following the trade of a poet; and his father had the ſatisfaction of living long enough to ſee him in a ſure way of making a genteel fortune by it.

In verity, want of a due attention to this neceſſary point was none of our poet's weakneſs; on the contrary, we find him taking all

opportunities to puſh it to the utmoſt. In this ſpirit, not ſatisfied with the golden tide that was continually flowing in from his tranſlation, he publiſhed, in 1717, a collection of all the poetical pieces he had wrote before; in which the regard to his fortune had undeniably a conſiderable ſhare. He proceeded in the ſame ſpirit to give a new edition of Shakeſpear; which being publiſhed in 1721, diſcovered that he had conſulted his fortune in the undertaking more than his fame.

The Iliad being finiſhed, he engaged upon the like footing to undertake the Odyſſey; and that work being compleated in 1725, the following year was employed, in concert with his aſſociates, Dean Swift and Dr. Arbuthnot, in printing ſeveral volumes of Miſcellanies.

About this time, he narrowly eſcaped loſing his life as he was returning home in a friend's chariot; which, on paſſing a bridge, happened to be overturned, and thrown with the horſes into the river. The glaſſes were up, and he not able to break them; ſo that he was in immediate danger of drowning, when the poſtillion, who had juſt recovered himſelf, came to his relief; broke the glaſs which was uppermoſt, took him out, and carried him to the bank; but a fragment of the broken glaſs cut one of his hands ſo deſperately, that he loſt the uſe of two of his fingers.

He had now made ſuch a fence about his fortune, as put it out of danger; and the like fence, which he had been long labouring to

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ſet about his fame, being finiſhed in the Dunciad, that ſatire came out, in the year 1727, in 4to.

He ſomewhere obſerves, That the life of an author is a ſtate of warfare; and he has, in this attack, or, rather, ſeries of attacks, ſhewed himſelf a complete general in the art of this kind of war. Fabius cunctando, &c. Our poet bore the inſults of his enemies full ten years before he hazarded a general battle; he was all that while climbing the hills of Parnaſſus; during which, he could not forbear ſome ſlight ſkirmiſhes; and the ſucceſs of theſe was of uſe, in ſhewing him his ſuperior ſtrength, and thereby adding confidence to his courage, but he was now ſeated ſafely on the ſummit: beſides, he had obtained what, in his own opinion, is the happieſt end of life, the love of valuable men; and the next felicity, he declares, was to get rid of fools and ſcoundrels: to which end, after having, by ſeveral affected marches and counter-marches, brought the whole army of them into his power, he ſuddenly fell upon them with a pen as irreſiſtible as the ſword of Michael the arch-angel; and made an abſolutely univerſal ſlaughter of them, ſuffering not a ſingle ſoul to eſcape his fury.

The poem cautiouſly made its firſt appearance, as a maſked-battery, in Ireland; nor, indeed, was the triumph completed without the aſſiſtance of our author's undoubted ſecond, Dean Swift, who, having furniſhed it with

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ſome exquiſitely wrought artillery, in that pompous figure it made a new appearance, printed at London in 1728.

This edition was preſented to the king and queen, by Sir Robert Walpole; who probably at this time offered to procure Mr. Pope a penſion; which he refuſed with the ſame ſpirit as he had formerly done to an offer of the ſame kind made him by the lord Hallifax; which ſpirit of our author in declining this offer of Sir Robert's ſeems to be expreſſed in a letter of his, about this time, to his friend Dean Swift.

"I was once before," ſays he, "diſpleaſed at you for complaining to Mr. ------- of my not having a penſion; I am ſo again, at your naming it to a certain lord. I have given proof, in the courſe of my life, from the time when I was in the friendſhip of lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Craggs, even to this time when I am civily treated by Sir Robert Walpole, that I never thought myſelf ſo warm in any party's cauſe, as to deſerve their money, and therefore would never have accepted it. I deſire you to take off any impreſſions which that dialogue may have left upon his lordſhip's mind, as if I ever had any thoughts of being beholden to him, or any other, in that way."

One of the proofs here intimated, was the refuſal he had given, many years before, to

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an offer of the ſame kind by lord Halifax; as appears by a letter to that lord as early as the year 1714; where he writes in theſe terms:

"My Lord,

"I AM obliged to you, both for the favours you have done me, and for thoſe you intend me. I diſtruſt neither your will, nor your memory, when it is to do good; and, if ever I become troubleſome or ſollicitous, it muſt not be out of expectation, but out of gratitude. It is, indeed, a high ſtrain of generoſity in you, to think of making me eaſy all my life, only becauſe I have been ſo happy as to divert you a few hours; but, if I may have leave to add, it is becauſe you think me no enemy to my native country, there will appear a better reaſon; for I muſt of conſequence be very much, as I ſincerely am,

"Yours, &c."

It is alſo well known, that Mr. Craggs, in 1710, gave him a ſubſcription for one hundred pounds in the South-Sea, of which he made no manner of uſe.

As theſe offers muſt be underſtood to be made in the view of taking him off from his attachments to his friends, his refuſal of them are ſo many illuſtrious proofs of his ſteadineſs in that point. Yet he declares, in a letter to

Dr.

Dr. Swift, that he had perſonal obligations, which he would ever preſerve, to men of different ſides.

In 1729, our poet, in the view of ſetting yet another fence about his fortune, purchaſed an annuity of one hundred pounds for his own life, that of his mother being likewiſe included.

The ſame year, by the advice of lord Bolingbroke, he turned his pen to ſubjects of morality; and accordingly we find him, with the aſſiſtance of that friend, at work this year upon his Eſſay on Man. The following extract of a letter to Dean Swift, diſcovers the reaſon of his lordſhip's advice.

"Bid him [Pope] talk to you of the work he is about. I hope in good earneſt; it is a fine one, and will be in his hands an original. His ſole complaint is, that he finds it too eaſy in the execution. This flatters his lazineſs. It flatters my judgment; who always thought, that, univerſal as his talents are, this is eminently, and peculiarly, his, above all the writers I know, living or dead; I do not except Horace."

Pope tells the dean, in the next letter, what this work was.

"The work he [Bolingbroke] ſpeaks of with ſuch abundant partiality, is a ſyſtem of Ethics, in the Horatian way."

In

In another letter, written probably in the entrance of the following year, we ſee the general aim which, at leaſt, he wiſhed might be attributed to this work.

"I am juſt now writing, or rather planning a book to bring mankind to look upon this life with comfort and pleaſure; and put morality in good humour."

This ſubject was exactly ſuited to his genius; he found the performance eaſy to a degree that ſurprized himſelf, and he thereupon employed his leiſure hours in purſuing the ſame deſign in his Ethic Epiſtles, which came out ſeparately in the courſe of the two following years. But a great clamour was raiſed againſt the Fourth of theſe Epiſtles, addreſſed to lord Bolingbroke, upon Taſte; and the character of Timon in it gave great offence. The deſcription, it is ſaid, was too plain not to be known who was pointed at; and the late duke of Chandois it is ſaid wrote to our author in ſuch a manner as made him ſenſible, that he ought to have confined himſelf to a made character.

Mr. Pope, we are told, began to wiſh he had not carried the matter ſo far, but there was no receding; all he could do was to palliate the buſineſs; and this was done in a letter by Mr. Cleland to Mr Gay, in December, 1731. But this letter was not ſatisfactory, nor yet one he wrote to the duke profeſſing his innocence.

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All this while, he had the pleaſure to ſee the Epiſtle ſell ſo, that it went through the preſs a third time very ſoon. Thereupon, in high ſpirits, he publiſhed a letter to lord Burlington, the March following; wherein having taken notice of the clamour which, he ſays, through malice and miſtake ſtill continued; he expreſſes his reſentment of this uſage, diſavows any deſign againſt the duke, makes him ſeveral high compliments, and then proceeds thus:

"Certainly the writer deſerved more candour, even in thoſe who know him not, than to promote a report, which, in regard to that noble perſon was impertinent; in regard to me villainous.

"I have taken," continues he, "an opportunity of the third edition, to declare his belief not only of my innocence, but of their malignity; of the former of which my heart is as conſcious, as I fear ſome of theirs muſt be of the latter; his humanity feels a concern for the injury done to me, while his greatneſs of mind can bear with indifference the inſult offered to himſelf."

After this, he concludes with threatning to make uſe of real names, not fictitious ones, in his enſuing works; and how far he went into the execution of that menace, will preſently be ſeen; for the unreaſonable complaints which were

were made againſt this Epiſtle by ſome ſecret enemies, put him upon writing ſatires, in which he ventured to attack the characters of ſome perſons of high rank; and the affront was reſented in ſuch a manner, as provoked him to let looſe the whole fury of his ſatirical rage againſt them, which was poured forth in proſe and verſe.

In the firſt ſatire of the ſecond book of Horace, he had deſcribed lord Harvey and lady Mary Wortley Montague, ſo characteriſtically, under the names of lord Fanny and Sappho, that theſe two noble perſonages did not only take up the ſame weapons againſt the aggreſſor, but uſed all their intereſt among the nobility, and even with the king and queen, to hurt him.

This laſt injury was what Pope complained of moſt; and, for that reaſon, the letter which he wrote in anſwer to it was ſhewn to her majeſty as ſoon as it was finiſhed, which concludes with theſe words:

"After all, your lordſhip will be careful not to wrong my moral character with thoſe under whoſe protection I live; and through whoſe lenity alone I can live with comfort. Your lordſhip, I am confident, upon conſideration, will think you inadvertently went a little too far, when you recommended to their peruſal, and ſtrengthened by the weight of your approbation, a libel mean in its reflections upon my poor figure, and ſcandalous in

thoſe upon my honour and integrity; wherein I was repreſented as an enemy to human race, a murderer of reputations, a monſter marked by God like Cain, deſerving to wander accurſed through the world.---A ſtrange picture of a man, who had the good fortune to enjoy many friends, who will be always remembered as the firſt ornament of his age and country, and no enemies that ever continued to be heard of, except Mr. John Dennis and your lordſhip.---A man who never wrote a line, in which the religion or government of his country, the royal family, or their miniſtry, were diſreſpectfully mentioned; the animoſity of any one party gratified at the expence of another; or any cenſure paſt, but upon known vices, acknowledged folly, or aggreſſing impertinence. It is with infinite pleaſure he finds, that ſome men, who ſeem aſhamed and afraid of nothing elſe, are ſo very ſenſible of this ridicule; and 'tis for that very reaſon, he reſolves, by the grace of God, and your lordſhip's good leave,

That, while he breathes, no rich or noble knave
Shall walk the world in credit to his grave.

"This he thinks is rendering the beſt ſervice he can to the public, and even to the good government of his fellow-creatures. For this, at leaſt, he may deſerve ſome commendations from the greateſt perſons in it. Your lordſhip

lordſhip knows of whom I ſpeak ---- their names I ſhould be as ſorry, and as much aſhamed, to place near yours on ſuch an occaſion, as I ſhould to ſee you, my lord, placed ſo near their perſons, if you could ever make ſo ill an uſe of their ear as to aſperſe or miſrepreſent an innocent man."

Pope did not think proper to print this letter; nor yet, what is more remarkable, to communicate it to his friend Swift; to whom he excuſed himſelf in a letter, ſent with his Fourth Eſſay on Man, and his Epiſtle to lord Cobham.

"There is a woman's war," ſays he, "declared againſt me by a certain lord; his weapons are the ſame which women and children uſe; a pin to ſcratch, and a ſquirt to beſpatter. I writ a ſort of anſwer, but was aſhamed to enter the liſts with him; and, after ſhewing it to ſome people, ſuppreſſed it: otherwiſe it was ſuch as was worthy of him, and worthy of me."

He had before given that friend an account of this affair, and of his own conduct in it, as follows:

"That I am an author, whoſe characters are thought of ſome weight, appears from the great noiſe and buſtle that the court and town make about me. I deſire your opinion

as

as to lady -----'s and lord -----'s performance. They are certainly the top wits of the court; and you may judge, by that ſingle piece, what can be done againſt me; for it was laboured, corrected, pre-commended, and paſt diſapproved; ſo far as to be diſowned by themſelves, after each had highly cried it up for the other's.

I have met mith ſome complaints, and have heard at a diſtance of ſome threats occaſioned by my verſes. I ſent fair meſſeges to acquaint them where I was to be found in town, and to offer to call on them at their houſes to ſatisfy them; and ſo it dropped. It is very poor in any one to rail and threaten at a diſtance, and have nothing to ſay to you when they ſee you."

He knew well the nature of his friend, and this addreſs was ad hominem; accordingly he receeived a moſt comforting anſwer, which concludes thus:

"Give me a ſhilling, and I will inſure you, that poſterity ſhall never know one ſingle enemy, excepting thoſe whoſe memory you have preſerved."

After this, he continued writing ſatires till the year 1739, when he entertained ſome thoughts of undertaking an epic poem; which, however, proved abortive. He has told us in the Epilogue the reaſon of his laying

ing down his pen on thoſe ſatirical ſubjects; and he gave the true one for laying down his moral eſſays long before to Dr. Swift.

"I am," ſays he, "almoſt at the end of my morals, as I have been long ago of my wit; my ſyſtem is a ſhort one, and my circle narrow. Imagination has no limits; that is a ſphere in which you may move on to eternity: but where one is confined to truth, or, to ſpeak more like a human creature, to the appearances of truth, we ſoon find the ſhortneſs of our tether."

This was not his caſe as a ſatiriſt; the tartneſs of that laſh was too liquoriſh to be cloying. Though he was drawn out of the ſphere for a while by ſome more immediately intereſting views, yet we ſhall find him returning to it again in a little time, and continuing to move in it till death arreſted his ſteps.

In the interim, ſeveral of his familiar letters having ſtole into the world without his privity, he publiſhed a genuine collection of them in 1737; the avowed incident for which publication is retailed in the Preface, and the truth of it reſts upon our author's name.

The ſtory is undeniably ſomewhat intricate, which cauſed a ſuſpicion that ſome cunning had been uſed by him; but we muſt content ourſelves with another reaſon for publiſhing theſe letters at this time, which conſiders them as a part of the deſign of his Magnum Opus, or his

his Eſſay on Man, Ethic Epiſtles, and Satires.

"My opinion is," ſays D. Warburton, "that there might be collected from them the beſt ſyſtem that ever was wrote for the conduct of human life, at leaſt to ſhame all reaſonable men out of their follies and vices; and, no doubt, the manner in which Mr. Curll got poſſeſſion of ſome of them, is a flaming inſtance of the corruption of the age."

Whatever may be thought of this reaſon, it is certain the increaſe of his purſe had no ſmall ſhare in the motives for publiſhing them. Familiar letters betwixt perſons of any reputation will always meet with readers; and the reaſon of it is well expreſſed in theſe very letters by lord Bolingbroke, who, in a poſtſcript to one of Pope's to Swift, writes thus:

"I ſeek no epiſtolary fame, but am a good deal pleaſed to think, that it will be known hereafter that you and I lived in the moſt friendly intimacy together.---Pliny," continues his lordſhip, writ his letters for the public; ſo did Seneca; ſo did Balzac, Voiture, &c. Tully did not; and therefore theſe give us more pleaſure. We ſee Cato, and Brutus, and Pompey, ſuch as they really were, and not ſuch as the gaping multitude of their own age took them to be, or as hiſtorians and poets have

have repreſented them to us.---That is another pleaſure.

" I remember to have ſeen a proceſſion at Aix la Chapelle, wherein an image of Charlemagne is carried on the ſhoulders of a man, who is hid by the long robe of the imperial ſaint. Follow him into the veſtry, you ſee the bearer ſlip from under the robe, and the gigantic figure dwindle into an image of an ordinary ſize, and is ſet by among other lumber."

His lordſhip's remark is undeniably very juſt, and unavoidably turns our eyes upon his pupil, who is the perſon chiefly concerned in it. Accordingly, we find, in theſe letters, not only that he had given into ſome gayeties in his youth, as well as other poets, for that he had made public confeſſion of long before; but, what was at this time particularly intereſting, theſe letters diſcover the peculiar ſting in the name of Sappho, under which he ſatirizes lady Mary Wortley Montague.

That pretieuſe, Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, ſo called by her keeper Mr. Cromwell, being entruſted by the latter to preſerve ſeveral of our author's letters which he had ſent to Cromwell, ſhe ſold them to Curll, who, it is ſaid, made uſe of them as ſo many decoy-ducks to draw in others; and, by that means, the ſurreptitious edition of our author's letters was completed; for which reaſon our author ſent

the following rondeau to Cromwell, that it might be communicated to her.

You know where you did deſpiſe,
T'other day, my little eyes,
Little legs, and little thighs,
And ſomething elſe of little ſize,
You know where.

You, 'tis true, have fine black eyes,
Taper legs, and tempting thighs:
Yet what more than all we prize
Is a thing of little ſize,
You know where.

It was about this time, that, the ill ſtate of Pope's health having frequently drawn him to Bath, he could not long remain there unknown to Mr. Allen, a very eminent Quaker who reſided near that place, and was ſo much pleaſed with the Letters of our poet, as to ſeek an opportunity for contracting a friendſhip with their author; the reſult of which was his acquaintance with Mr. Warburton; who tells us, he had, before the commencement of this intimacy, wrote his Commentary upon the Art of Criticiſm, as alſo on the Eſſay on Man.

The great complaint of that eſſay was its obſcurity; which our author had been told of by

by his friend Dean Swift, who wrote to him thus upon its firſt appearance:

"I confeſs," ſays that friend, "in ſome few places, I was forced to read twice. I believe I told you before what the duke of D--- ſaid to me on that occaſion; how a judge here who knows you, told him, that, on the firſt reading theſe eſſays, he was much pleaſed, but found ſome lines a little dark; on the ſecond, moſt of them cleared up, and his pleaſure increaſed; on the third, he had no doubt remaining; and, that he admired the whole."

But their obſcurity was comparatively a ſmall fault; the author was alſo charged with having laid a plan of deiſm. It was againſt this objector, that Mr. Warburton firſt entered the liſts, in defence of Pope, in theſe Commentaries; and Mr. Pope, in a letter to him on this occaſion, acknowledges the obſcurity of his piece.

"You have," ſays he, "made my ſyſtem as clear as I ought to have done, and could not: you underſtand me as well as I do myſelf, but you expreſs me better than I expreſs myſelf." And, in a ſubſequent letter upon the ſame ſubject, he goes ſtill further: "You underſtand my work," ſays he, "better than I do myſelf."

Mr. Warburton's Commentary being thus approved, the Eſſay on Man was re-publiſhed therewith in 1740. But it appears, from thoſe acknowledgments of Mr. Pope, as if lord Bolingbroke, who confeſſedly furniſhed the matter of the Eſſay, had put more into our author's head than he was able perfectly to comprehend. This edition, with the Comment, was tranſlated into French, by a gentleman belonging to Monſ. Cromby, an ambaſſador. Mr. Pope deſired his friend Warburton to procure a good tranſlation of the Eſſay on Man into Latin proſe, which was begun by a gentleman of Cambridge; but a ſpecimen which was ſent to our author not happening to pleaſe him, that deſign proved abortive.

It was alſo at the inſtance of Mr. Warburton, that our author added a fourth book to the Dunciad; which was printed ſeparately in the year 1742.

About the time that Pope acquainted his laſt-mentioned friend with his deſign to add this book to the three former of the Dunciad, they went together to Oxford, where Mr. Pope had the compliment made to him of an offer of a doctor's degree in law; which he chuſing to wave, went further weſt to viſit ſome friends, leaving his fellow-traveller in the univerſity; who ſtaying there a day longer to viſit his friend Dr. John Conybeare, dean of Chriſtchurch, received a meſſage that day from the vice-chancellor, by a perſon of eminence in the univerſity, with the like compliment,

to

to know if a doctor's degree in divinity would be acceptable to him. The offer was entertained in a very different manner from the former to Mr. Pope. But this latter proved a meer compliment, the makers of it being, as it ſeems, miſtaken in imagining, that one friend would not chuſe to be doctored without the other; ſo that, when the congregation met for the purpoſe, the grace paſſed in the negative.

This affront was warmly reſented by Mr. Warburton: but he had ſufficient amends made to him for it by Dr. Thomas Herring, archbiſhop of Canterbury, who conferred that degree upon him not long after.

In the next year, this whole poem of the Dunciad came out together, as a ſpecimen of a more correct edition of his works, which he had then reſolved to give to the public: and he made ſome progreſs in that deſign, but did not live to compleat it.

In the former edition, of 1742, Mr. Cibber being then become laureat, was promoted to the throne of Dullneſs: which indignity he was judged to have merited by a late attack upon our author, wherein, among other things, was revealed a ludicrous paſſage of his youthful days to this purpoſe: That Mr. Pope was decoyed to a brothel by a certain nobleman, in company of Cibber; who there, out of pure compaſſion, pulled him off one of the ladies whom he had mounted, and might have done himſelf a miſchief. The ſtory was told

with humor, and, indeed, was no more than a very appoſite return to a reflection caſt upon Cibber ſome years before, in the epiſtle to Dr. Arbuthnot.

And has not Colley ſtill his lord and whore?

The truth is, there had been between them an irreconcileable quarrel of a long ſtanding, which, unluckily for Pope, and with ſome little blemiſh to his character, begun in the play-houſe; and he continued in a ſtate of warfare with the players ever after. In the mean time, Cibber thrived, procured many valuable friends, and at laſt obtained the laureat's place.

All this was apparently beheld with no pleaſing eyes by his antagoniſt, who now reſolved to take his full revenge by making him the hero of his Dunciad. To this purpoſe, no art that he could deviſe was left untried againſt this hated rival. The farce began with an act of ſettlement upon the throne, which runs thus:

"BY virtue of the authority in us veſted, by the act of ſubjecting poets to the power of a licenſer, we have reviſed this piece; where, finding the ſtile and place of king have been given to a certain pretended pſeudo-poet, or phantom, of the name of Theobald; and apprehending the ſame may be deemed, in ſome ſort, a reflection on majeſty; or, at leaſt, an

an encroachment on that legal authority, which has beſtowed on another perſon the crown of poeſy: We order the ſaid pretended pſeudo-poet, or phantom, utterly to vaniſh and depart out of the work; and declare the ſaid throne of poeſy, from this inſtant, to be abdicated and vacant, unleſs duly and lawfully ſupplied by the laureat himſelf: and it is hereby enacted, that no other perſon preſume to fill the ſame."

And, leſt this ſhould not be ſufficient, there was prefixed the following advertiſement:

"It was expreſſedly confeſſed, in the Preface to the firſt edition, that this poem was not publiſhed by the author himſelf. It was printed originally in a foreign country; and what foreign country? Why, one notorious for blunders; where, finding blanks only inſtead of proper names, thoſe blunderers filled them up at their pleaſure. The very heroe of the poem has been miſtaken to this hour; ſo that we are obliged to open our notes with a diſcovery who he really was. We learn from the former editor, that this piece was preſented by the hands of Sir Robert Walpole to king George the Second. Now the author directly tells us, his heroe is the man

——— who brings
The Smithfield muſes to the ears of kings.

And it is notorious to whom this prince conferred the honour of laureat."

To theſe jocoſe attempts to fix the intended infamy upon Cibber, there was added another in the ſerious way, in the edition of 1743, by Mr. Warburton; who tells us, he had long had a deſign of giving ſome ſort of notes on the work of this poet, before he had any acquaintance with him. He thought ſome were wanting of a more ſerious kind."

"I had lately," continues he, "the pleaſure of paſſing ſome months with the author in the country, where I prevailed upon him to do what he had long deſigned, and favour me with an explanation of ſeveral paſſages in his works. It happened, juſt at this juncture, that there was publiſhed a ridiculous book againſt him full of perſonal reflections, which furniſhed him with a lucky opportunity of improving this poem, by giving it the only thing it wanted, a more conſiderable heroe. He was always ſenſible of its defect in that particular, and only let the piece paſs with the hero it had, purely for want of a better; not entertaining the leaſt expectation, that ſuch a one was reſerved for this poſt as had obtained the laureat. He could no longer deny this juſtice. And yet I ſhall venture to ſay, there was another motive which had ſtill more weight with our author; this perſon, who, from

from every folly, not to ſay vice, of which another would be aſhamed, has conſtantly derived a vanity, and therefore was the man in the world who would leaſt be hurt by it."

All this while the general cry ran in favour of Colley, and this laſt effort on Pope's ſide was ſo far from having the deſired effect, that it was turned againſt him, and conſtrued to proceed from a conſciouſneſs of his newly-dubbed heroe's ſuperiority in the ſkirmiſh; it being obſervable, that, in theſe pen-wars, contrary to thoſe of the ſword, he that keeps the field, i. e. has the laſt word, has generally the worſt of it.

The truth is, Cibber, in his pamphlet, promiſed to keep his temper, and did ſo; by which means our author was deprived of his uſual weapons of advantage, and the laureat got ſome reputation by his performance; which conſequently Mr. Pope muſt have loſt. ---Thus it happened, that he was a little unlucky in the choice of both the heroes to the Dunciad.

His edition of Shakeſpear proved no better than a foil to ſet off the ſuperiority of Theobald's: and Cibber bore away the palm from him in the drama. We have account of two attempts of Pope's, one in each of the two branches of this ſpecies of poetry, and both unſucceſsful.

He had all his life been ſubject to an habitual head-ach, and that hereditary complaint

was now greatly increaſed by a dropſy in his breaſt, under which he expired on the thirtieth of May, 1744, in the fifty-ſixth year of his age.

His body was depoſited, purſuant to his own requeſt, in the ſame vault with thoſe of his parents, to whoſe memory he had erected a monument with an inſcription written by himſelf. It is as follows, but in capital characters.

D. O. M.
Alexandro Pope, viro innocuo, probo, pio;
Qui vixit an. 75. ob. 1717.
Et Edithæ conjugi, inculpabili, pientiſſimæ;
Quæ vixit annos 93. ob. 1733.
Parentibus bene merentibus
Filius fecit.
Et ſibi. Obiit an. 1744. ætatis 56.

This laſt line was added after his death, in purſuance to his will; the reſt was done on the death of his parents.

Not long before his death he made his Will; in which he conſtituted Miſs Blount his teſtamentary-heir during her life; and, among other legacies, he bequeathed to Dr. Warburton the property of ſuch of his works already printed, as he had written, or ſhould write, Commentaries upon, and had not been otherwiſe diſpoſed of, or alienated; with this condition, that they were publiſhed without future.

After

After he had made his Will, he wrote this legatee a letter; in which, having informed him of his legacy, he ſays,

"I own the late encroachments upon my conſtitution make me willing to ſee the end of all further care about me or my works. I would reſt for the one, in a full reſignation of my being to be diſpoſed of by the Father of all Mercies; and, for the other, though, indeed, a trifle, yet a trifle may be ſome example, I would commit them to the candour of a ſenſible and reflecting judge, rather than to the malice of every ſhort-ſighted and malevolent critic, or inadvertent and cenſorious reader; and no head can ſet them in ſo clear a light, or ſo well turn their beſt ſide to the day, as your own."

In diſcharge of this truſt, that gentleman gave a compleat edition, in 1751, of all Mr. Pope's works, executed in ſuch a manner as, he was perſuaded, would have been to the author's ſatisfaction.

The elegance of this edition is very commendable, and it is not to be doubted, but that the author's deſign, as to the collection, is faithfully obſerved, as far as it could be done. How far the editor's privilege in writing notes extended, is only known to himſelf. Several inſerted in the firſt edition, were left out in the ſecond; but ſtill ſeveral were retained, which contain ſevere, not to ſay, ill-natur-

ed, reflections, upon the author's deareſt friends. Theſe have not eſcaped cenſure.

'Tis ſaid, that allowing the remarks to be juſt, yet the inſerting them in his works muſt either be an injury to his will, or leave his moral character indefenſible. One of theſe gives room to ſuſpect this laſt to be the caſe with regard to theſe friends.

In the 84th letter of the 9th volume, Mr. Pope expreſſes himſelf to that old friend, Dean Swift, thus:

"You aſk me if I have got any ſupply of new friends to make up for them that are gone; I think that impoſſible: but as, when the continual waſhing of a river takes away our flowers and plants, it throws weeds and ſedges in their room; ſo the courſe of time brings us ſomething, as it deprives us of a great deal: and, inſtead of leaving us what we cultivated, and expected to flouriſh and adorn us, gives us only what is of ſome little by accident. Thus I have acquired —— But I had my heart hardened, and blunt to new impreſſions. Adieu. I can ſay no more, I feel ſo much."

To the word room we ſee the following note:

"There are ſome ſtrokes in this letter, which can no otherwiſe be accounted for, than by the author's extreme compaſſion and tenderneſs

derneſs of heart, too much affected by the complaints of a peeviſh old man, labouring and impatient under his infirmities, and too intent on the friendly office of mollyfying them."

The editor, we ſee, attributes theſe expreſſions of the author's love to an extremity of compaſſion, that is to weakneſs; but it is a very pardonable one, as long as we don't know them to be inconſonant to ſome other warm expreſſions of love to any of his new friends, which may well be ſuppoſed to be the caſe at the time of his writing this letter, that is, before he knw Dr. Warburton, or wrote thoſe letters to him that are printed in this volume; wherein, if the expreſſions are ſincere, it cannot be denied that our author had changed his heart a little ſince the time of his writing the letter here cited to Dean Swift. Be that as it will; Lord Orrery very juſtly diſliked the continual complimenting turn of theſe letters; and thoſe that have been ſince added by Mr. Warburton, will give him no reaſon to like them better on that account.

In 1749, there was publiſhed a treatiſe by lord Bolingbroke, with a preface, wherein Mr. Pope's conduct, with regard to that piece, was repreſented as a moſt inexcuſable act of treachery to his friend. It was entitled An Advertiſement, and was drawn up in theſe terms:

The

"The following papers were written ſeveral years ago, at the requeſt, and for the ſake, of ſome particular friends, without the deſign of ever making them public. How they came to be made ſo, at this time, it may be proper to give an account.

"The original draughts were entruſted to a man on whom the author thought he might entirely depend after he had exacted from him, and taken, his promiſe, that they ſhould never go into any hands except thoſe of five or ſix friends who were named to him. In this confidence the author reſted ſecurely for ſome years; and, though he was not without ſuſpicion, that they had been communicated to more perſons than he intended they ſhould be, yet he was kept, by repeated aſſurances, even from ſuſpecting that any copies had come into hands unknown to him. But this man was no ſooner dead, than he received information, that an entire edition of one thouſand five hundred copies of theſe papers had been printed; that this very man had corrected the preſs, and that he had left them in the hands of the printer to be kept with great ſecrecy till further orders. The honeſt printer kept his word with him better than he kept his word with his friend; ſo that the whole edition came at laſt into the hands of the author, except ſome few copies which this perſon had taken out of the heap and carried away. By theſe copies it appeared, that the man who had

had been guilty of this breach of truſt, had taken upon him further to divide the ſubject, and to alter and omit paſſages according to the ſuggeſtion of his own fancy.

"What aggravates this proceeding, is, that the author had told him, on ſeveral occaſions, among other reaſons, why he would not conſent to the publication of theſe papers, was, That they had been wrote in too much haſte and hurry for the public eye, though they might be truſted to a few particular friends; he added, more than once, that ſome things required to be ſoftened; others, perhaps, to be ſtrengthened; and the whole, moſt certainly, to be corrected; even if they were to remain, as he then imagined they would, in the hands of a few friends only."

The main particulars of this fact were too notorious to be denied: but Mr. Warburton entered heartily, with great zeal, into his friend's vindication; and endeavoured even to throw the greateſt part of the infamy, that neceſſarily ſtuck to ſuch a piece of treachery, upon that noble lord; and by that means drew part of the reſentment due to Mr. Pope upon himſelf, in an anſwer which was publiſhed with this title: "To the moſt impudent Man alive."

A ſlip of the like kind with this of our author, in reſpect to his friend lord B----, was made by his frend Dean Swift in regard to himſelf.

"They

"They have printed," ſays he, "in Ireland, my letters to Dr. Swift; and, which is the ſtrongeſt circumſtance, by his own conſent and direction, without acquainting me till it was done."

Thus he writes to Dr. Warburton; to which that friend notes, That this was the ſtrongeſt reſentment he [Pope] ever expreſſed of this indiſcretion of his old friend; as being perſuaded that it proceeded from no ill will to him, though it expoſed him to the ill will of others:--and it therefore is to be hoped, that a like indulgence will be exerted in attaining an excuſe for this proceeding of our author; more eſpecially ſince Warburton aſſures us, That,

"To have been one of the beſt poets in the world was but Mr. Pope's ſecond praiſe; he was in a higher claſs; he was one of the noblest works of God, he was An Honeſt Man."

And lord Orrery obſerves, That,

"If we may judge of him by his works, his chief aim was to be eſteemed a man of virtue. His letters are written in that ſtyle, his laſt volumes are all of the moral kind; he has avoided trifles, and conſequently has eſcaped a rock, which has proved very injurious

rious to Dr. Swift's reputation. He has given his imagination full ſcope, and yet has preſerved a perpetual guard upon his conduct. The conſtitution of his body and mind might really incline him to the habits of caution and reſerve. The treatment which he met with afterwards, from an innumerable tribe of adverſaries, confirmed this habit, and made him ſlower than the dean in pronouncing his judgment upon perſons and things. His proſe writings are little leſs harmonious than his verſe: and his voice, in common converſation, was ſo naturally muſical, that I remember Honeſt Tom Southern uſed to call him The Little Nightingale. His manners were eaſy, delicate, and engaging; and he treated his friends with a politeneſs that charmed, and a generoſity that was much to his honour. Every gueſt was made happy within his doors, pleaſure dwelt under his roof, and elegance preſided at his table."

THE LIFE OF

JONATHAN SWIFT.

JONATHAN SWITH, Doctor of Divinity, dean of St. Patrick's, ſon of Mr. Jonathan Swift and Mrs. Abigail Erick, was born in Dublin, November 30, 1667, and was carried into England ſoon after his birth, by his nurſe, who being obliged to croſs the ſea, and having a nurſe's fondneſs for the child, at her breaſt, conveyed him on ſhip-board without the knowledge of his mother or relations, and kept him with her at Whitehaven, in Cumberland, during her reſidence three years at that place. Many of his friends imagined him to be a native of England; and many others, whether friends or enemies cannot be ſaid, were willing to ſuppoſe him the natural ſon of ſir William Temple. Neither of theſe ſuggeſtions can be true; for although, in his angry moods, when he was provoked at the ingratitude of the Iriſh, he was frequently heard to ſay, "I am not of this vile country; I am "an Engliſhman;" yet, in his cooler hours, he never denied his country: on the contrary, he frequently mentioned, and pointed out, the houſe where he was born. The other ſuggeſtion,

Avelinx sculp.

Dean Swift.

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geſtion, concerning the illegitimacy of his birth, is very falſe. Sir William Temple was employed as a miniſter abroad from the year 1665 to the year 1670; ſo that Dr. Swift's mother, who never croſſed the ſea, except from England to Ireland, was out of all poſſibility of a perſonal correſpondence with Sir William Temple, till ſome years after her ſon's birth. As the greateſt part of the doctor's father's income periſhed with him, the care, tuition, and expence of his children, devolved upon his elder brother, Mr. Godwin Swift, who voluntarily became their guardian, and ſupplied the loſs which they had ſuſtained in a father.

The infancy of Dr. Swift paſſed on without any marks of diſtinction. At ſix years old he went to ſchool at Kilkenny, and about eight years afterwards was entered a ſtudent of Trinity-college in Dublin; where he lived in perfect regularity, and underwent an entire obedience to the ſtatutes: but the moroſeneſs of his temper often rendered him unacceptable to his companions; ſo that he was little regarded, and leſs beloved; nor were the academical exerciſes agreeable to his genious.

He held logic and metaphyſics in the utmoſt contempt, and he ſcarce conſidered mathematics and natural philoſophy, unleſs to turn them into ridicule.

The ſtudies he chiefly followed were hiſtory and poetry, in which he made no great progreſs; but to all other branches of ſcience he had given ſo very little application, that when he

appeared as a candidate for bachelor of arts he was ſet aſide on account of inſufficiency; and even he obtained his admiſſion, ſpeciali gratiâ, a phraſe which, in that univerſity carries with it the utmoſt marks of reproach. Swift was full of indignation at the treatment he had received in Ireland, and therefore reſolved to purſue his ſtudies at Oxford. However, that he might be admitted ad eundem, he was obliged to carry with him the teſtimonium of his degree. The expreſſion ſpeciali gratiâ is ſo peculiar to the univerſity of Dublin, that, when Mr. Swift exhibited his teſtimonial at Oxford, the members of the Engliſh univerſity concluded, that the words ſpeciala gratiâ muſt ſignify a degree conferred in reward of extraordinary diligence and learning. He was immedietely admitted ad eundum, and entered himſelf of Hart-hall, now Hartford-college, where he conſtantly reſided (ſome viſits to his mother at Leiceſter, and to ſir William Temple at Moore-park, excepted) till he took his degree of maſter of arts, which was in the year 1691.

The reader may be curious to know in what manner Mr. Swift ſubſiſted, or by what channel the ſprings of his revenue were ſupplied, at a time when both kingdoms, but particularly Ireland, were in ſuch great confuſion.

The reader will alſo tremble for him, when he is told, that in the year of the revolution his uncle Mr. Godwin Swift had fallen into a kind of lethargy, which deprived him by degrees,

degrees, of his ſpeech and memory, and rendered him totally incapable of being of the leaſt ſervice to his family.

But in the midſt of this diſtreſſed ſituation, Sir William Temple (whoſe lady was related to Dr. Swift's mother) moſt generouſly ſtepped in to his aſſiſtance, and avowedly ſupported his education at the univerſity of Oxford. Sir William Temple's friendſhip was immediately conſtrued to proceed from a conſciouſneſs that he was the real father.

It ought not to be here omitted, that another of his father's brothers, Mr. William Swift, aſſiſted him when at Oxford, by repeated acts of friendſhip and affection.

Swift, as ſoon as he had quitted the univerſity of Oxford, lived with Sir William Temple, as his friend and domeſtic companion. When he had been about two years with Sir William, he contracted a very long and dangerous illneſs, by eating an immoderate quantity of fruit.

To this ſurfeit he has often been heard to aſcribe that giddineſs in his head, which, with intermiſſions, ſometimes of a longer and ſometimes of a ſhorter continuance, purſued him, till it ſeemed to complete its conqueſt, by rendering him the exact image of one of his old Struldbruggs, a miſerable ſpectacle, devoid of every appearance of human nature, except the outward form.

In compliance to his phyſicians, when he was ſufficiently recovered to travel, he went

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to Ireland to try the effects of his native air; and found ſo much benefit by the journey, that in compliance to his own inclination, he ſoon returned into England, and was again received in a moſt affectionate manner, by Sir William Temple, who had now left Moore-park, and was ſettled at Shene, where he was often viſited by king William.

Here Swift had frequent converſations with that prince, in ſome of which the king offered to make him a captain of horſe: which offer in ſplenetic diſpoſitions he always ſeemed ſorry to have refuſed; but at that time he had reſolved within his own mind to take orders, and during his whole life, his reſolutions once fixed, wherever after immoveable. Thus determined, he went over to Ireland, and inliſted himſelf under the banner of the church.

He was recommended by Sir William Temple to lord Capel, then lord Deputy, who gave him a prebend, of which the income was about 100 l. a year. Swift ſoon grew weary of his preferment; it was not ſufficiently conſiderable, and was at ſo great a diſtance from the metropolis, that it abſolutely deprived him of that converſation and ſociety, in which he delighted.

He had been uſed to very different ſcenes in England, and had naturally an averſion to ſolitude and retirement. He was glad therefore to reſign his prebend in favour of a friend, and to return to Shene, where he lived as uſual till the death of Sir William Temple, who

who beſides a legacy in money, left to him the care and truſt of publiſhing his poſt-humous works.

During Swift's reſidence with Sir William Temple, he became intimately acquainted with a lady, whom he had diſtinguiſhed, and often celebrated under the name of Stella. Swift married her, but notwithſtanding, ſhe was a moſt accompliſhed woman, he could never be prevailed on to own her openly as his wife, although after her death, (which happened in 1727) he could never hear her mentioned without a ſigh.

Upon the death of Sir William Temple, Swift came to London, and took the earlieſt opportunity of delivering a petition to king William, under the claim of a promiſe made by his majeſty to Sir William Temple, "that "Mr. Swift ſhould have the firſt vacancy that "happened among the prebends of Weſtmin-"ſter or Canterbury." The petition had no effect. It was either totally forgotten, or drowned amidſt the clamour of more urgent claims.

After a long and fruitleſs attendance at Whitehall, Mr. Swift reluctantly gave up all thoughts of a ſettlement in England.

Mr. Swift had dedicated Sir William Temple's works to the king, which dedication was neglected, nor did his majeſty take the leaſt notice of him after Sir William's death.

Honour or rather pride, hindered him from ſtaying long in a ſtate of ſervility and contempt

tempt. He therefore complied with an invitation from the earl of Berkley, appointed one of the lords juſtices in Ireland, to attend him as his chaplain and private ſecretary. Lord Berkeley landed at Waterford, and Mr. Swift acted as ſecretary during the whole journey to Dublin. But one Buſh, another of lord Berkeley's attendants, had by this time inſinuated himſelf into the earl's favour, and by his wiſperings, which were perhaps too attentively liſtened to, had perſuaded his lordſhip that the poſt of ſecretary was improper for a clergyman, to whom only church preferments could be ſuitable or advantageous. After ſome ſlight apology, Mr. Swift was diveſted of his office, which was given to Buſh.

This treatment was thought injurious, and Swift expreſſed his ſenſibility of it, in a ſhort, but ſatirical copy of verſes, entitled, The Diſcovery. However, during the government of the earls of Berkeley and Galway, who were jointly lords juſtices of Ireland, two livings, Laracor and Rathbeggan, were beſtowed upon Mr. Swift, both theſe rectories together, were worth about two hundred and ſixty pounds a year, and were the only church preferments he enjoyed, till he was appointed dean of St. Patrick's, in the year 1713.

After Mr. Swift had taken poſſeſſion of his livings, he went to reſide at Laracor, and gave publick notice to his pariſhioners, that he would read prayers once every Wedneſday and Friday. Upon the ſubſequent Wedneſday the bell

bell was rung, and the rector attended in his desk, when after having sat some time, and finding the congregation to consist only of himself and his clerk Roger, he began with great composure and gravity, but with a turn peculiar to himself, "Dearly beloved Roger, "the scripture moveth you and me in sundry "places," and proceeded regularly through the whole service. This trifling circumstance is only mentioned to shew, that he could not resist a vein of humour whenever he had an opportunity of exerting it.

During his mother's life, who resided at Leicester, he scarce ever failed paying her an annual visit. But his manner of travelling was as singular as any other of his actions. He often went in a waggon, but more frequently walked from Holyhead to Leicester, London, or any other part of England. He generally chose to dine with waggoners, hostlers, &c. and used to lay in houses where he found written over the door, lodgings for a penny. He delighted in scenes of low life, and the vulgar dialect was not only a fund of humour for him, but in all probability acceptable to his nature, otherwise how are the many filthy ideas and indelicate expressions that are found throughout his works to be accounted for.

In the year 1701, Swift took his doctor's degree, and towards the latter end of that year king William died.

On the accession of queen Anne, Dr. Swift came into England. It cannot be denied, that

the chief miniſters of that queen, whether diſtinguiſhed under the titles of whigs or tories, of high church or of low church, were from the beginning to the end of her reign, encouragers of learning, and patrons of learned men.

The wits of that æra were numerous and eminent. Amidſt the croud, yet ſuperior to the reſt appeared Dr. Swift. In a mixture of theſe two jarring animals, called whig and tory, conſiſted the firſt miniſtry of queen Anne, but the greater ſhare of the adminiſtration was committed to the whigs, who ſoon engroſſed the whole; keeping their ſovereign captive within their own walls.

The queen, whoſe heart was naturally enclined towards the tories, remained an unwilling priſoner ſeveral years to the wigs, till Mr. Harley at length delivered her, and during the remainder of her life, ſurrounded and defended with a new ſet of troops under the duke of Ormond.

Dr. Swift was known to the great men of each denomination; it is certain that he was bred up, and educated with wigs; at leaſt with ſuch as may be found ranged under that title. His motives for quitting whiggiſm for toryiſm, appear throughout his works.

No metamorphoſes can produce a parallel equal to the change that appears in the ſame man, when from a patriot he becomes a courtier, yet it may be aſſerted, and will redound to the honour of Dr. Swift, that when he

he roſe into the confidence and eſteem of thoſe great men, who ſat at the helm of affairs during the laſt years of queen Anne's reign, he ſcarce ever loſt himſelf, or grew giddy by fulneſs of power, or the exalted ſtation of frequently appearing in the confidence and favour of the firſt miniſter, he may have been carried away by paſſion, or may have erred in judgment, but he was always upright in his intentions.

There is ſcarce any material circumſtance to be found relating to his life from the year 1702, till the change of the miniſtry in the year 1710, during which interval, he worked hard to undermine the whigs, and to open a way for the tories to the queen. His intimacy with lord Oxford commenced, as may be deduced from his works, in October 1709. In a poem written in 1713, he ſays,

'Tis (let me ſee) three years and more
(October next will make it four)
Since Harley bid me firſt attend,
And choſe me for an humble friend.

And again in another poem written in this ſame year,

My lord would carry on the jeſt,
And down to Windſor take his gueſt.
Swift much admires the place and air
And longs to be a canon there.
A canon! that's a place too mean,
No, doctor, you ſhall be a dean.

By this laſt quotation, and by numberleſs other inſtances in his works, it ſeems undeniable, that a ſettlement in England was the conſtant object of Dr. Swift's ambition; ſo that his promotion to a deanery in Ireland, was rather a diſappointment than a reward, as appears in many expreſſions in his letters to Mr. Gay and Mr. Pope.

In the year 1739, the character of Dr. Swift as an author, was perfectly eſtabliſhed, and as Homer ſays of Ulyſſes: he could appear a beggar among beggars, and a king among kings.

From the year 1710, to the lateſt period of queen Anne, we find him fighting on the ſide of the miniſters, and maintaining their cauſe in phamphlets, poems and weekly papers. A man always appears of more conſequence to himſelf, than he is in reality to any other perſon. Such was the caſe of Dr. Swift. He ſaw himſelf indulged by the ſmiles of the earl of Oxford in particular, and knew how uſeful he was to the adminiſtration in general, and in one of his letters he mentions, that the place of hiſtoriographer was preſerved for him; but there is reaſon to ſuſpect, that he flattered himſelf too highly; at leaſt it is very evident, that he remained without preferment till the year 1713, when he was made dean of St. Patrick's. In point of power and revenue, ſuch a deanery might appear no inconſiderable promotion; but to an ambitious mind, whoſe perpetual aim was a ſettlement in England,

land, a dignity in any other kingdom muſt appear only an honourable and profitable baniſhment.

There is great reaſon to imagine, that the temper of Swift might occaſion his Engliſh friends to wiſh him happily and properly promoted at a diſtance. His ſpirit was ever untractable, the motions of his genius irregular. He aſſumed more the airs of a patron than a friend. He affected rather to dictate than adviſe. He was elated with the appearance of enjoying miniſterial confidence. He enjoyed the ſhadow: the ſubſtance was detained from him.

Reflections of this kind will account for his miſſing an Engliſh biſhoprick, a diſappointment which he imagined he owed to a joint application made againſt him to the queen by Dr. Sharp, then archbiſhop of York, and by a lady of the higheſt rank and character.

Archbiſhop Sharp, according to Dr. Swift's account, had repreſented him to the queen, as a perſon who was not a Chriſtian; the great lady had ſupported the aſperſion; and the queen upon ſuch aſſurances, had given away the biſhoprick contrary to her firſt intentions. Swift kept himſelf indeed within ſome tolerable bounds when he ſpoke of the queen: but his indignation knew no limits, when he mentioned the archbiſhop or the lady.

Dr. Swift had little reaſon to rejoice in the land where his lot had fallen: for upon his arrival in Ireland to take poſſeſſion of his

deanery, he found the violence of party reigning in that kingdom to the higeſt degree. The common people were taught to look upon him as a jacobite, and they proceeded ſo far in their deteſtations as to throw ſtones at him as he paſſed through the ſtreets.

The chapter of St. Patrick's like the reſt of the kingdom, received him with great reluctance. They thwarted him in every particular he propoſed. He was avoided as a peſtilence, oppoſed as an invader, and marked out as an enemy to his country. Such was his firſt reception as dean of St. Patrick's. Fewer talents and leſs firmneſs, muſt have yielded to ſuch violent oppoſition.

But ſo ſtrange are the revolutions of this world, that Dr. Swift, who was now the deteſtation of the Iriſh rabble, lived to govern them with an abſolute ſway.

The dean's firſt ſtep was to reduce to reaſon and obedience, his reverend brethren of the chapter of St. Patrick's in which he ſucceeded ſo well, and ſo ſpeedy, that in a ſhort time after his arrival, not one member of that body offered to contradict him, even in trifles. On the contrary, they held him in the higheſt veneration.

Dr. Swift made no longer ſtay in Ireland, in the year 1713, than was requiſite to eſtabliſh himſelf a dean, and to paſs through certain cuſtoms, and formalities, or to uſe his own words,

Through

——— Through all vexations,
Patents, inſtalments, abjurations,
Firſt-fruits, and tenths, and chapter-treats,
Dues, payments, fees, demands, and ——cheats.

During the time of theſe ceremonies, he kept a conſtant correſpondence with his friends in England: all of whom were eminent, in either birth, ſtation or abilities.

In the beginning of the year 1714, Dr. Swift returned to England. He found his great friends at the helm, much diſunited among themſelves. He ſaw the queen declining in her health, and diſtreſſed in her ſituation. The part which he had to act upon this occaſion, was not ſo difficult as it was diſagreeable; he exerted all his ſkill to reunite the miniſters.

As ſoon as Swift found his pains fruitleſs, he retired to a friend's houſe in Berkſhire, where he remained till the queen's death, an event which fixed the period of his views in England, and made him return as faſt as poſſible to his deanery in Ireland, loaded with grief and diſcontent.

From the year 1714, till he appeared in 1720, as a champion for Ireland againſt Wood's halfpence, his ſpirit of politics and patriotiſm, was kept cloſely confined within his own breaſt. His attendance upon the public ſervice of the church was regular and uninterrupted: and, indeed regularity was peculiar to him in all his actions, even in the moſt trifling.

His works, from the year 1714, to the year 1720, are few in number, and of ſmall importance. Poems to Stella, and trifles to Dr. Sheridan fill up a great part of that period.

In the year 1720, he began to reaſume the character of a political writer. A ſmall pamphlet in defence of the Iriſh manufactories, was ſuppoſed to be his firſt eſſay in Ireland in that kind of writing: and to that phamphet, he owed the turn of the popluar tide in his favour.

Dr. Swift's ſayings of wit, and humour had been handed about, and repeated from time to time among the people. They were adapted to the underſtanding, and pleaſed the imagination, of the vulgar; and he was now looked on in a new light, and diſtinguiſhed by the title of the dean.

The pamphlet, propoſing the univerſal uſe of the Iriſh manufacture within the kingdom, had captivated all hearts. Some little pieces of poetry to the ſame purpoſe, were no leſs acceptable and engaging, nor was the dean's attachment to the true intereſt of Ireland any longer doubted. His patriotiſm was as manifeſt as his wit; he was looked upon with pleaſure and reſpected as he paſſed through the ſtreets; and had attained to ſo high a degree of popularity, as to become the arbitrator in diſputes among his neighbours.

But the popular affection which the dean had hitherto acquired, may be ſaid not to have been univerſal, till the publication of the

Drapier's

Drapier's Letters, which made all ranks and profeſſions univerſal in his applauſe. The occaſion of thoſe letters is too well known to need any place here.

At the ſound of the Drapier's trumpet a vaſt ſpirit aroſe among the people of all ranks and denomination. The papiſt, the fanatic, the whig and the tory, all liſted themſelves under the banner of the Drapier.

Never was any name beſtowed with more univerſal approbation, than the name of the Drapier was beſtowed upon the dean, who had no ſooner aſſumed it, than he became the idol of Ireland, even to a degree of devotion, and bumpers were poured forth to the Drapier, as large and as frequent as to the glorious and immortal memory of king William III. Acclamations and vows for his proſperity attended him wherever he went, and his effigies was painted in every ſtreet in Dublin.

The dean was conſulted in all points relating to domeſtic policy in general, and to the trade of Ireland in particular; but he was more immediately looked on as the legiſlator of the weavers, who frequently came to him in a body, to receive his advice in ſettling the rates of their manufactures, and the wages of their journeymen.

When elections were depending for the city of Dublin, many corporations refuſed to declare themſelves, till they had conſulted his ſentiments and inclinations.

We have now conducted the dean through the moſt intereſting circumſtances of his life to the fatal period wherein he was utterly deprived of his reaſon, a loſs which he often ſeemed to foreſee, and prophetically lamented to his friends. The total deprivation of his ſenſes came upon him by degrees.

In the year 1736, he was ſeized with a violent fit of giddineſs, he was at that time writing a ſatirical poem, called, The Legion Club; but he found the effects of his giddineſs ſo dreadful that he left the poem unfiniſhed, and never afterwards attempted a compoſition of any length, either in verſe or proſe: however, his converſation ſtill remained the ſame, lively and ſevere; but his memory gradually grew worſe and worſe, and as that decreaſed, he grew every day more fretful and impatient.

From the year 1739, to the year 1744, his paſſions grew ſo violent and ungovernable, his memory became ſo decayed, and his reaſon ſo depraved, that the utmoſt precautions were taken to prevent all ſtrangers from approaching him: for till then, he had not appeared totally incapable of converſation: early in the year 1742, the ſmall remains of his underſtanding became entirely confuſed, and the violence of his rage increaſed abſolutely to a degree of madneſs. In this miſerable ſtate, he ſeemed to be appointed as a proper inhabitant of his own hoſpital: eſpecially as from an outrageous lunatic, he ſunk into a quiet, ſpeechleſs idiot;

idiot; and dragged out the remainder of his life in that helpleſs ſituation. He died towards the latter end of October 1745.

The manner of his death was eaſy without the leaſt pang or convulſion; even the rattling in his throat was ſcarce ſufficient to give any alarm to his attendants till within ſome very little time before he expired. Swift certainly foreſaw his fate.

Dr. Swift was often heard to lament the ſtate of childhood and idiotiſm, to which ſome of the greateſt men of the nation were reduced before their death. He mentioned as examples within his own time, the duke of Marlborough and lord Somers: and when he cited theſe melancholy inſtances it was always with a heavy ſigh, and with great apparent uneaſineſs, as if he felt an impulſe of what was to happen to him before he died.

He left his whole fortune, ſome few legacies excepted, which was about twelve thouſand pounds, to the building of an hoſpital for idiots and lunatics. As to his works, lord Corke has given a very nice and critical account of them in his Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Swift, from which this life is extracted.

Dr. Swift's will, like all his other writings, is drawn up in his own peculiar manner; even in ſo ſerious a compoſition he cannot help indulging himſelf (in leaving legacies that carry with them an air of raillery and jeſt. He diſpoſes of his three hats, his beſt, ſecond beſt,

and third beaver) with an ironical ſolemnity that renders the bequeſt's ridiculous. He bequeaths,

"To Mr. John Gratton, a ſilver box, to "keep in it the tobacco which the ſaid John "uſually chewed, called pigtail."

But his legacy to Mr. Robert Gratton is ſtill more extraordinary.

"Item, I bequeath to the reverend Mr. Ro- "bert Gratton, prebendary of St. Audeon's, "my ſtrong box, on condition of his giving "the ſole uſe of the ſaid box unto his "brother, Dr. James Gratton, during the life "of the ſaid doctor, who has more occaſion "for it."

Theſe are ſo many impreſſions of his turn, and way of thinking; and there is no doubt, that the perſons thus diſtinguiſhed, look upon theſe inſtances, affectionate memorials of his friendſhip, and as tokens of the jocoſe manner, in which he treated them during his life-time.

His poem of the greateſt length is Cadenus and Vaneſſa. Dr. Swift's works were elegantly publiſhed by Dr. Hawkſworth, in 6 vols. 4to. and 12 vols. 8vo, in 1754.

FEB

Aveline

Lord Bolinbroke.

THE LIFE OF

HENRY SAINT-JOHN.

HENRY, SAINT-JOHN, Lord Viſcount Bolingbroke, was born in 1672 at Batterſea in Surry, the ſeat of that noble family. During his infancy, his education was chiefly directed by the Diſſenters; but, as ſoon as it became proper to take him out of the hands of the women, he was ſent to Eton ſchool, and removed thence to Chriſt-Church-college in Oxford.

At his firſt entrance into the Houſe of Commons, he expreſſed himſelf warmly againſt the Diſſenters, and ſided with the Church party.

His opponents, therefore in the four laſt years of Queen Anne's reign, raiſed a clamour (by a remark idle enough in itſelf, but not therefore of leſs weight among the populace) from the inconſiſtency of this conduct with his education; having been, as they alledged, bred up from his infancy in diſſenting principles, and well tutored by his grandmother, and her confeſſor Daniel Burgeſs, in the Preſbyterian way. This latter part of the ſtory is, indeed, probable enough, ſince both his grandparents were inclined to think well of the piety

piety and ſanctity of that ſect, and both lived many years after he came into publick buſineſs.

We have alſo a hint of it from his own pen, by which we may ſee at the ſame time, how little reliſh he had for it even in thoſe years. He is ridiculing the large commentaries upon St. Matthew and St. John by Chryſoſtom, "which ſays he, puts me in mind of "a puritannical parſon, Dr. Manton, who, if "I miſtake not, for I have not looked into "the folio ſince I was a boy, and condemned "ſometimes to read it, made 119 ſermons on "the 119th Pſalm." But that he was ever tinctured with diſſenting principles in reſpect of the eſtabliſhed Church, cannot fairly be inferred from thence, ſince though both Sir Walter and his lady were remarkable for ſincere piety, yet they were no ſuch bigots to Puritaniſm as were repreſented.

Dr. Simon Patrick, afterwards Biſhop of Ely, who was long chaplain, and lived many years in the family, always ſpoke of them with the higheſt reverence as well as gratitude. The pariſh records at Batterſea will ſhew, that Sir Walter was a good though a moderate Churchman, by almoſt every kind of teſtimony.

He repaired that fabrick more than once; erected, in virtue of a faculty from the Biſhop, an entire new gallery, and built and endowed a charity-ſchool, all at his own expence. To this

this laſt, his lady was likewiſe a contributor, as well as a great Patroneſs to Dr. Patrick.

As to her father, the chief juſtice, St. John, whatever were his principles concerning religion, he was no bigot; for he preſerved the cathedral church of Peterborough, when no body elſe would have preſerved it, and when the Parliament were importuned for a grant of it by Cromwell, in conſideration of his ſervices.

As to Daniel Burgeſs, though a Diſſenter, yet he was undeniably a man of wit and good parts; ſo that though it ſhould be allowed that our ſtateſman was lectured ſometimes by him, yet he could receive no ſourneſs to the eſtabliſhed church by thoſe lectures.

The truth is, that had the tutor been never ſo ſour a religioniſt, it would not have been in his power to have inſtilled any part of it into his pupil, whoſe nature was far from being ſuſceptible of ſuch leaven, of which the following is a proof more than ſufficient.

His lordſhip remarking the uſefulneſs of that little genious, that literal critics and dictionary makers are bleſſed with, expreſſes himſelf in theſe terms: "I approve therefore, very much of the devotion of a ſtudious man at Chriſt-Church [college in Oxford], who was overheard in his oratory entering into a detail with God, as devout perſons are apt to do, and, amongſt other particular thankſgivings, acknowledging the divine goodneſs, in furniſh-

furniſhing the world with makers of dictionaries."

His genius and underſtanding were ſeen and admired by his contemporaries in both theſe places; but the love of pleaſure had ſo much the aſcendancy, as to hinder him from exerting his talents for literature in any particular performance. His friends deſigned him for publick buſineſs, and when he left the univerſity, he was conſidered as one who had the faireſt opportunity of making a ſhining figure in that way of an active life.

With the graces of a handſome perſon, in whoſe aſpect dignity was happily tempered with ſweetneſs, he had a manner and addreſs that was irreſiſtibly engaging; a ſparkling vivacity, a quick apprehenſion, a piercing wit, were united to a prodigious ſtrength of memory, a peculiar ſubtlety of thinking and reaſoning, and maſterly elocution; but for ſome years, all theſe extraordinary endowments were employed in nothing ſo much as finiſhing the character of a complete rake of the firſt genius; he was particularly much addicted to women, and apt to indulge himſelf in late hours, with all thoſe exceſſes that uſually attend them.

This character is very conſiſtent with ſeaſons of cool reflections and lucid intervals; nay, theſe are eſſential ingredients in ſuch a compoſition: without theſe, the character ſinks into an ordinary and deſpicable debauchee. The like difficulties and diſaſters are run into by

by both, but have not the like effect upon each: the latter in these circumstances, sinks into an inactive and lumpish stupidity; the former, incapable of standing still, when thus checked in the indulgence of his power, immediately exerts his nobler faculties.

Thus his lordship assures us, that "The "love of study and desire of knowledge, were "what he felt all his life; and though his "genius, unlike the dæmon of Socrates, whis-"pered so softly, that very often he heard him "not, in the hurry of those passions with "which he was transported, yet continues he, "some calmer hours there were; in them I "hearkened to him." Some of these lucid intervals were employed in versifying. We have the following copy prefixed to Mr. Dryden's Virgil, 1697.

No undisputed monarch govern'd yet,
With universal sway the realms of wit.
Nature could never such expence afford,
Each several province own'd a several lord!
A poet then had his poetic wife,
One Muse embrac'd, and married for his life.
By the stale thing his poetry was cloy'd,
His fancy lessen'd, and his fire destroy'd,
But Nature grown extravagantly kind,
With all her fairest gifts adorn'd his mind;
The different powers were then united found,
And you the universal monarch crown'd.
Your mighty sway her great deserts secures,
And every Muse and every Grace is your's.

To

To none confin'd, by turns you all enjoy;
Sated with theſe you to another fly.
So, Saltan like, in your ſeraglio ſtand,
While wiſhing miſſes wait for your command.
Thus no decay, no want of figure find;
Such is your fancy, boundleſs as your mind.
Not all the blaſts of time can do you wrong,
Young ſpite of age, in ſpite of weakneſs ſtrong.
Time, like Alcides, ſtrikes you to the ground;
You, like Antæus, from each fall rebound.'

Mr. Pope obſerves very juſtly, that his lordſhip was the patron, the friend and the protector, of that great poet in the decline of his age, though not of his parts; for the very laſt poems of Dryden are his beſt.

I hope what has been ſaid here will not be made uſe of as an encouragement to rakery; a ſprightly poem, flaſhing bon mot, or a glittering reply, may be admired, whilſt the general conduct of life is condemned; and it is leſſon enough, that lord Bolingbroke lived to tell us ſo.

In the entrance upon the XVIIth century, he was married to the daughter and co-heireſs of Sir Henry Wincheſcomb, of Bucklebury in Berkſhire, Bart. This ſettlement was in all reſpects ſuitable to his birth and expectations, and the ſame year, 1700, he entered into the Houſe of Commons, being elected for the borough of Wotton-Baſſet in Wiltſhire by a family intereſt, his father having ſerved ſeveral times for the ſame place: ſo that Mr. St. John,

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who was now about twenty-ſix years of age, took his ſeat in the Engliſh ſenate, with advantages ſcarcely inferior to thoſe of any member that ſat there.

He preſently choſe his party, and joined himſelf to Robert Harley, Eſq; who in this Parliament was choſen for the firſt time Speaker; and he made himſelf conſiderable before the end of this firſt ſeſſion.

Perſevering ſteadily in the ſame connection, he gained ſuch an authority and influence in the houſe, that it was thought proper to diſtinguiſh his merit; and April 10, 1704, he was appointed ſecretary at war, and of the marines. As this poſt created a conſtant correſpondence with the duke of Marlborough, he became perfectly acquainted with the worth of that great general, and zealouſly promoted his intereſt.

It is remarkable, that the greateſt events of the war, ſuch as the battles of Blenheim and Ramelies, and ſeveral glorious attempts made by the duke to ſhorten the war by ſome deciſive action, fell out while Mr. St. John was ſecretary at war. This gave him occaſion more than once to ſet forth his grace's conduct in a true light. For inſtance, in carrying through the houſe the act for ſettling upon him the honour of Woodſtock, with the penſion charged upon the Poſt-Office; and demonſtrating, that beſides all the great things he did, he would certainly have attempted, and in all probability, performed, ſtill greater, if he had

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not been reſtrained by the Dutch Deputies: whence there is good grounds to believe, that no body underſtood the duke's behaviour better, or was inclined to do more juſtice to his intentions, as well as his actions, than this gentleman.

Yet in that diſpoſition, a ſpirit of independency appears in ſetting Mr. Philips to write the poem called Blenheim, in emulation to the Campaign of Mr. Addiſon, who was recommended to that undertaking by lord Halifax. He was, 'tis evident, a ſincere admirer of that great general: he diſtinguiſhed himſelf as ſuch on the preſent, and avowed it upon all occaſions, even to the laſt moment of his life.

But when Mr. Harley was removed from the Seals in 1707, Mr. St. John choſe to follow his fortune, and the next day reſigned his employments in the adminiſtration: he alſo followed his friend's example, and behaved, during the whole ſeſſion of Parliament, with great temper, ſteadineſs, and decency. He was not returned in the Parliament which was elected in 1708; but upon the diſſolution of it in 1710, Mr. Harley being made chancellor and under-treaſurer of the exchequer, the important office of ſecretary of State was given to Mr. St. John; and about the ſame time he wrote the famous letter to the Examiner.

Upon the calling of a new parliament on the 25th of November, he was choſen knight of the ſhire for the county of Berks, and alſo burgeſs

burgeſs for Wotton-Baſſet, and made his election for the former.

This large acceſſion of power put him into a ſphere of action that called forth all his abilities: the Engliſh annals produce not a more trying juncture, and Mr. St. John appeared equal to every occaſion of trial.

He ſuſtained almoſt the whole weight of the difficulties in negotiating the peace of Utrecht; and, in July 1712, he was created Baron St. John of Lediard-Tregoze in Wiltſhire, and Viſcount Bolingbroke. He was alſo the ſame year appointed lord-lieutenant of the county of Eſſex.

But theſe honours not anſwering his expectations, he formed a deſign of taking the lead in public affairs from his old friend Mr. Harley, then earl of Oxford; which proved in the iſſue unfortunate to them both.

It muſt be obſerved that Paul St. John, the earl of Bolingbroke, died the 5th of October, preceding this creation. That by his deceaſe, though the Barony of Bletſho, devolved upon Sir Andrew St. John, Bart. yet the earldom became extinct, and the honour was promiſed to our author; but his preſence in the Houſe of Commons being ſo neceſſary at that time, the lord Treaſurer prevailed upon him to remain there during that ſeſſion, upon a promiſe that his rank ſhould be preſerved to him: but when he expected the old title ſhould have been renewed in his favour, which conſidering his ſervices, particularly in that ſeſſion, ſeemed

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reaſonable enough, he was put off with this of Viſcount; this he reſented as an affront and looked on it as ſo intended by the Treaſurer, who had got an earldom for himſelf.

It is not a little entertaining to ſee how his lordſhip expreſſes it:

"I continued," ſays he, "in the Houſe of "Commons during that important ſeſſion "which preceded the peace, and, which by "the ſpirit ſhewn through the whole courſe "of it, and the reſolutions taken in it, ren-"dered the concluſion of the treaties practica-"ble. After this, I was dragged into the "houſe of lords in ſuch a manner as to make "my promotion a puniſhment, not a reward, "there left to defend the treaties alone.

"It would not have been hard, continues "he, to have forced the earl of Oxford to uſe "me better. His good intentions began to be "very much doubted of; the truth is, no "opinion of his ſincerity had ever taken root "in the party; and, which was worſe perhaps "for a man in his ſtation, the opinion of his "capacity began to fall apace. He was ſo "hard puſhed in the houſe of lords in the be-"ginning of 1712, that he had been forced "in the middle of the ſeſſion, to perſuade the "Queen to make a promotion of twelve peers "at once; which was an unprecedented and "invidious meaſure, to be excuſed by nothing "but the neceſſity, and hardly by that. In "the houſe of commons his credit was low,

"and

"and my reputation very high. You know "the nature of that aſſembly; they grow like "hounds, fond of the man who ſhews them "game, and by whoſe halloo they are uſed to "be encouraged. The thread of the negotia- "tions, which could not ſtand ſtill a moment, "without going back, was in my hands: and "before another man could have made him- "himſelf maſter of the buſineſs, much time "would have been loſt, and great inconveni- "ences would have followed. Some who op- "poſed the court ſoon after, began to waver "then: and if I had not wanted the inclina- "tion, I ſhould have wanted no help, to do "miſchief. I knew the way of quitting my "employments, and of retiring from court "when the ſervice of my party required it; "but I could not bring myſelf up to that re- "ſolution, when the conſequence of it muſt "have been the breaking my party, and "the diſtreſs of the public affairs. I thought "my miſtreſs treated me ill, but the ſenſe of "that duty which I owed her, came in aid of "other conſiderations, and prevailed over my "reſentment. Theſe ſentiments, indeed, are "ſo much out of faſhion, that a man who "avows them is in danger of paſſing for a "bubble in the world: yet they were, in the "conjuncture I ſpeak of, the true motives of "my conduct; and you ſaw me go on as "chearfully in the troubleſome and dangerous "work aſſigned me, as if I had been under "the utmoſt ſatisfaction. I began, indeed,

"in

"in my heart to renounce the friendſhip
"which 'till that time I had preſerved invio-
"lable for Oxford. I was not aware, of all
"his treachery, nor of the baſe and little
"means which he employed then, and conti-
"nued to employ afterwards, to ruin me in
"the opinion of the Queen, and every where
"elſe. I ſay, however, that he had no friend-
"ſhip for any body, and that with reſpect to
"me, inſtead of having the ability to render
"that merit, which I endeavoured to acquire,
"an additional ſtrength to himſelf, it became
"the object of his jealouſy, and a reaſon for
"undermining me."

Preſently after the acceſſion of King George the firſt to the throne, in 1714, the ſeals were taken from the ſecretary, and all the papers in his office ſecured. However, during the ſhort ſeſſion of parliament at this juncture, he applied himſelf with his uſual induſtry and vigour, to keep up the ſpirit of the friends to the late adminiſtration, without omitting any proper occaſion of teſtifying his reſpect and duty to his Majeſty; in which ſpirit he aſſiſted in ſettling the Civil Liſt, and other neceſſary points. But, ſoon after the meeting of the new parliament, he withdrew, and croſſed the water privately to France, in the latter end of March, 1715.

Upon his arrival at Paris, he received an invitation from the Pretender, then at Barr, to engage in his ſervice; which he abſolutely refuſed,

refuſed, and made the beſt application that his preſent circumſtances would admit, to prevent the extremity of his proſecution in England.

After a ſhort ſtay at Paris, he retired into Dauphiné, where he continued 'till the beginning of July; when, upon receiving a meſſage from ſome of his party in England, he complied with a ſecond invitation from the Pretender; and taking the ſeals of the ſecretary's office under him at Commercy, he ſet out with them for Paris; in which city he arrived in the latter end of the ſame month, in order to procure from that court the neceſſary ſuccours for his new maſter's intended invaſion of England.

The vote for impeaching him of high-treaſon had paſſed in the houſe of commons on the tenth of June preceding, and ſix articles were ſent up by them to the lords on the ſixth of Auguſt following: in conſequence of which he ſtood attainted of high treaſon, September 10th the ſame year.

They were brought into the houſe, and read by Mr. Walpole, Auguſt 4, 1715, and were in ſubſtance as follows: Art. 1. That whereas he had aſſured the miniſters of the States-General, by order from her Majeſty in 1711, that ſhe would make no peace but in concert with them; yet he ſent Mr. Prior to France that ſame year, with propoſals of a treaty of peace with that monarch, without the conſent of the Allies.

Art. 2. That he adviſed and promoted the making of a ſeparate treaty, or convention, with France, which was ſigned in September.

Art. 3. That he diſcloſed to Mr. Meſnager, the French miniſter at London, this convention, which was the preliminary inſtructions to her Majeſty Plenipotentiaries at Utretcht in October.

Art. 4. That her Majeſty's final inſtructions to her ſaid Plenipotentiaries were diſcloſed by him to the Abbot Gualtier, an emiſſary of France.

Art. 5. That he diſcloſed to the French the manner how Tournay in Flanders might be gained by them.

Art. 6. That he adviſed and promoted the yielding up of Spain and the Weſt-Indies to the duke of Anjou, then an enemy to her Majeſty.

It muſt not be concealed, that Sir Joſeph Jekyl, a gentleman of the moſt unbiaſſed integrity, and great knowledge in the law, and a member of the ſecret committee, obſerved, that there was matter more than enough to prove the charge againſt lord Bolingbroke, at the ſame time that he declared his opinion, that they had nothing ſufficient to ſupport the the charge againſt the earl of Oxford. His lordſhip, 'tis true, though he allows that they could have hold on no man ſo much as on himſelf; the inſtructions, the orders, the memorials for the peace, having been drawn by him; the correſpondence relating to it, in France

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and every where elſe, carried on by him; in a word, his hand appeared to almoſt every paper which had been writ in the whole courſe of the negotiation. Yet, ſpeaking of the attainder, which, in conſequence of this impeachment, had paſſed againſt him, for crimes, as he obſerves, of the blackeſt dye; he takes notice, that, among other inducements to paſs it, his having been engaged in the Pretender's intereſt was one. How well founded this article was, has already appeared; I was juſt as guilty, ſays he, of the reſt.

It is remarkable, that his new engagements had the ſame iſſue, as far as could be effected in the different circumſtances of the two courts, and that the year 1715 was ſcarcely expired, when the ſeals and papers of his new ſecretary's office were demanded and given up, which was ſoon followed by an accuſation branched into ſeven articles, wherein he was impeached of treachery, incapacity and neglect.

Thus diſcarded abroad, he reſolved to make his peace, if poſſible, at home. He ſet himſelf immediately in earneſt to his work, and in a ſhort time, by that activity which was characteriſtic of his nature, and with which he conſtantly proſecuted all his deſigns, he procured, through the mediation of the earl of Stair, then the Britiſh ambaſſador at the French court, a promiſe of pardon, upon certain conditions, from his Majeſty King George I. who, on the ſecond of July, 1716, created his father

baron of Batterſea in the county of Surry, and Viſcount St. John.

Such an extraordinary variety of diſtreſsful events had thrown him into a ſtate of reflection, and this produced, by way of relief, a Conſolatio Philoſophica, which he wrote the ſame year, under the title of Reflections upon Exile. He had alſo this year wrote ſeveral letters in anſwer to the charge laid upon him by the Pretender and his adherents; and the following year he drew up a vindication of his whole conduct with reſpect to the tories, in the form of a letter to Sir William Wyndham. He alſo took a more ſubſtantial method of ſupporting his ſpirits: his firſt lady being dead, he eſpouſed about this time a lady of great merit, who was neice to the famous Madam de Maintenon, and widow of the Marquis de Villette; with whom he had a very large fortune, which was, however, encumbered with a long and troubleſome lawſuit.

In the company and converſation of this lady, he paſſed his time in France, ſometimes in the country, and ſometimes at the capital, 'till 1723; in which year, after the breaking up of the Parliament, his Majeſty was pleaſed to grant him a full and free pardon. Upon the firſt notice of this favour, the expectation of which had been the governing principle of his political conduct for ſeveral years, he returned to his native country.

It is obſervable, that biſhop Atterbury, who was baniſhed at this very juncture, happening, on his being ſet aſhore at Calais, to hear that lord Bolingbroke was there, on his return to England, made this remark: Then I am exchanged. There was undoubtedly appearance enough of ſuch a thing from the circumſtances.

Bolingbroke's leave to return was granted, immediately after the act for baniſhing Atterbury had received the royal aſſent; and this leave was obtained at the preſſing inſtance of lord Harcourt, who had ſhewed great warmth in proſecuting the biſhop. We are told alſo, that Sir Robert Walpole, who was obſerved not to be particularly engaged againſt the latter, oppoſed the return of Bolingbroke very warmly in a ſpeech at the council-board, when the motion for it was made by Harcourt.

Perhaps Mr. Pope alludes to this exchange, in a letter to Dean Swift, where he writes thus:

"The lord Bolingbroke is now returned, "as I hope, to take me, with all his other "hereditary rights. It is ſure my ill fate, "that all thoſe whom I moſt loved, and with "whom I moſt lived, muſt be baniſhed. After "both of you left England, my conſtant hoſt "was the biſhop of Rocheſter. Sure this is "a nation, which is curſedly afraid of being "over run with too much politeneſs; and we "cannot

" cannot regain one great genius, but at the " expence of another."

And two years afterwards, having obtained an Act of Parliament to reſtore him to his family inheritance, and enabling him likewiſe to poſſeſs any purchaſe he ſhould make of any other real or perſonal eſtates in the kingdom; he pitched upon a ſeat of lord Tankerville's, at Dawley near Uxbridge, in Middleſex, where he ſettled with his lady, and indulged the pleaſure of gratifying the politeneſs of his taſte, by improving it into a moſt elegant villa, picturesque of the preſent ſtate of his fortune, and there amuſed himſelf with rural employments.

We have a ſketch of his lordſhip's way of life at this retreat, in a letter to Dr. Swift by Mr. Pope, who omits no opportunity of repreſenting his lordſhip in the moſt amiable colours. This letter is dated at Dawley, June 8, 1728, and begins thus:

" I now hold the pen for my lord Boling-
" broke, who is reading your letter between
" two hay cocks; but his attention is ſome-
" what diverted, by caſting his eyes on the
" clouds, not in admiration of what you ſay,
" but for fear of a ſhower. He is pleaſed
" with your placing him in the triumvirate
" between yourſelf and me; though he ſays,
" that he doubts he ſhall fare like Lepidus:
" while one of us runs away with all the
" power,

"power, like Auguſtus; and another with all
"the pleaſure like Anthony. It is upon a
"a foreſight of this, that he has fitted up his
"farm; and you will agree, that this ſcheme
"of retreat is not founded upon weak appear-
"ances. Upon his return from Bath, he finds
"all peccant humours are purged out of him;
"and his great temperance and œconomy are
"ſo ſignal, that the firſt is fit for my conſtitu-
"tion, and the latter would enable you to lay
"up ſo much money, as to buy a biſhoprick
"in England. As to the return of his health
"and vigour, were you here you might en-
"quire of his haymakers: but as to his tem-
"perance I can anſwer, that for one whole
"day we had nothing for dinner, but mutton-
"broth, beans and bacon, and a barn door
"fowl. —— Now his lordſhip is run after his
"cart, I have a moment left to myſelf to tell
"you, that I overheard him yeſterday agree
"with a Painter, for 200 pounds, to paint his
"country hall with rakes, ſpades, prongs, &c.
"and other ornaments, merely to countenance
"his calling this place a farm."

So far Mr. Pope; to which I will take leave to add, from ocular teſtimony, that it was painted accordingly; and what ſtill makes it more ſtriking, the whole is executed in black crayons only: ſo that one cannot avoid calling to mind, on viewing it, the figures ſo often ſeen ſcratched with charcoal upon the kitchen walls of farm-houſes. And to heighten the

ſame taſte, we read over the door, at the entrance into it, this motto: Satis beatus rurís honoribus. In the ſame humour, likewiſe, his lordſhip writes to Dr. Swift.

"I am in my farm, and here I ſhoot ſtrong "and tenacious roots; I have caught hold of "the earth, to uſe a Gardener's phraſe, and "neither my enemies nor my friends will find "it an eaſy matter to tranſplant me."

Thus the tree was replanted, took root, and flouriſhed. But ſtill it bore not the fruit that was moſt deſired, and for want of which the owner looked upon it as little better then a barren trunk; he was in effect, yet no more than a meer titular lord, and ſtill ſtood excluded from a ſeat in the houſe of Peers.

Inflamed with this taint that yet remained in his blood, he entered again, in 1726, upon the public ſtage; and diſavowing all obligations to the miniſter, he embarked in the oppoſition; and taking that ſhare in it for which he was beſt ſuited by his circumſtances, he ſoon diſtinguiſhed himſelf by a multitude of pieces, wrote during the ſhort remainder of that reign, and likewiſe for ſeveral years under the late, with great freedom and boldneſs, againſt the meaſures that were then purſued.

In the height of theſe political diſputes, he found ſome ſpare hours for the meditations of Philoſophy, and drew up ſeveral eſſays upon

the ſubject of metaphyſics. Having carried on his part of the ſiege againſt the miniſter, with inimitable ſpirit for ten years; he laid down his pen, upon a diſagreement with his principal coadjutors: and, in 1735, he retired to France, in a full reſolution never more to engage in public buſineſs.

It has been obſerved, that, in the proſecution of this controverſy, our ſtateſman found himſelf obliged, from the beginning, to recommend the earl of Oxford's old ſcheme under the coalition of parties (then called the Broad-bottom Scheme) the Tories being at this time out of any condition to aim at places and power, except as auxiliaries: and it may be added, that he joined with a perſon who had ſhewn the ſame conduct with regard to Sir Robert Walpole, as he had done to the earl of Oxford. However, his lordſhip was reſolved to puſh it as far as poſſible; and when ſome ſuſpicions began to ariſe in him of the fidelity of his new friends, Mr. Pope ſays he gave him a hint of it in the firſt lines of his Eſſay on Man.

Awake, my St. John, leave all meaner things
To low ambition, and the pride of kings.

But this had not the deſired effect. In anſwer to that friend's ſuggeſtions he writes thus;

"The ſtrange ſituation I am in, and the melancholy ſituation of public affairs, take up much of my time, divide or even diſſipate my thoughts; or, which is worſe, drag the mind down, by perpetual interruptions, from a philoſophical tone or temper to the drudgery of private and public buſineſs. The laſt lies neareſt my heart. And, ſince I am once more engaged in the ſervice of my country, diſarmed, gagg'd, and almoſt bound as I am, I will not abandon it as long as the integrity and perſeverance of thoſe who are under none of theſe diſadvantages, and with whom I now co-operate, make it reaſonable for me to act the ſame part."

Accordingly he read ſuch lectures as ſtill kept people together; and, to his credit, it cannot be denied, as a political writer, that he managed the whole affair with the utmoſt dexterity; and very happily threw out a ſyſtem of policy, ſo curiouſly contrived, that a man might enter into and purſue the public buſineſs of the nation (if with any propriety a controverſy carried on for the ſake of power by a ſet of men in any place whatever may be ſo called) without deſerting, in his own opinion at leaſt, his private notions of government. But when he ſaw the threads which he had wove together begin actually to untwiſt, and was ſatisfied his new friends would ſhew their party-princi-

ples as ſoon as the line of oppoſition was cut, then he declared, that no ſhadow of duty obliged him to go further.

Plato, he obſerves, ceaſed to act for the commonwealth when he ceaſed to perſuade: and Solon laid down his arms before the public magazines, when Piſiſtratus grew too ſtrong to be oppoſed any longer with hopes of ſucceſs.

His lordſhip followed theſe examples, but not without collecting his utmoſt force to give a parting-blow to the miniſter; which, in reality, of all his maſterly pieces is generally eſteemed the beſt.

He had now ſeen through the ſixtieth year of his age, and had paſſed through as great a variety of ſcenes, both of pleaſure and buſineſs, in active life, as any of his contemporaries. He had gone as far towards reinſtating himſelf in the full poſſeſſion of his former honours as the meer dint of parts and application could go; and was at length experimentally convinced, that the decree was abſolutely irreverſible, and the door was finally ſhut againſt him.

If, in the decline of his life, he became leſs conſpicuous, he became more amiable, and he was far from ſuffering the hours to ſlide away unuſefully.

He had not been long at his retreat near Fontainbleau, when he began a courſe of Letters on the Study and Uſe of Hiſtory, for the uſe of a young nobleman of diſtinguiſhed worth and capacity.

In the mean time it was evident, that a perſon of ſo active an ambition as he was tempered with, muſt lie greatly open to ridicule, in aſſuming a reſigned philoſophical air of ſtudy and contemplation. He ſaw it, and, to obviate the cenſure, he addreſſed a letter to lord Bathurſt, upon the True Uſe of Retirement and Study; where we ſee he had no intention, by ſhifting the ſcene, to drop the oppoſition to the miniſter, but only to change a little the method of attack. We will, however, ſhew the reader what he himſelf ſays in his defence to avoid this ſuſpected ridicule.

"To ſet about acquiring the habits of meditation and ſtudy, late in life, is like getting into a go-cart with a grey beard, and learning to walk when we have loſt the uſe of our legs. In general, the foundation of a happy old age muſt be laid in youth; and, in particular, he who has not cultivated his reaſon young, will be utterly unable to improve it old. Manent ingenia ſenibus, modo permaneant ſtudium & induſtria.

"Not only a love of ſtudy, and a deſire of knowledge, muſt have grown up with us, but ſuch an induſtrious application likewiſe, as requires the whole vigour of the mind to be exerted in the purſuit of truth, through long trains of ideas, and all thoſe dark receſſes, wherein man, not God, has hid it.

This love, and this deſire, I have felt all my life; and I am not quite a ſtranger to this induſtry

induſtry and application. There has bee ſomething always ready to whiſper in my ear, whilſt I ran the courſe of pleaſure and buſineſs, Solve ſeneſcentem mature ſanus equum. But my genius, unlike the dæmon of Socrates, whiſpered ſo ſoftly, that very often I heard him not in the hurry of thoſe paſſions by which I was tranſported; ſome calmer hours there were, in them I hearkened to him; reflexion had often its turn; and the love of ſtudy, and the deſire of knowledge, have never quite abandoned me. I am not therefore entirely unprepared for the life I will lead; and it is not without reaſon that I promiſe myſelf more ſatisfaction in the latter part of it, than I ever knew in the former."

The plan of his deſigned attack he carried on in ſeveral pieces, executed with a ſpirit no ways unequal to that of his former productions.

Upon the death of his father, in 1724, he ſettled at Batterſea, the ancient ſeat of his family; where he paſſed the remainder of his life in ſuch a dignity, as was the natural reſult of the elevation of his genius, perfected by long experience, many diſappointments, and much reflection; reſolving, ſince he could not obtain his ſeat again in the houſe of peers, never more to meddle in public affairs.

After the concluſion of the late inauſpicious war, in 1747, the meaſures taken in the adminiſtration

miniſtration ſeem not to have been repugnant to his notions of political prudence for that juncture; and what theſe were, is ſeen, in part, in ſome reflections written by him in 1749, On the Preſent State of the Nation, principally with Regard to her Taxes and Debts, and on the Cauſes aud Conſequences of them.

This undertaking was left unfiniſhed, nor did he ſurvive it long. He had often wiſhed to fetch his laſt breath at Batterſea; a circumſtance which happened to him on the fifteenth of November, 1751, on the verge of fourſcore years of age.

His corpſe was interred with thoſe of his anceſtors, in that church; where there is a marble menument erected to his memory, with this inſcription:

Here lies
Henry St John;
In the reign of Queen Anne
Secretary of War, Secretary of State,
And Viſcount Bolingbroke.
In the the days of King George I.
And King George II.
Something more and better.
His attachment to Queen Anne
Expoſed him to a long and ſevere perſecution.
He bore it with firmneſs of mind.
The enemy of no national party,
The friend of no faction.

Diſtinguiſhed

Diſtinguiſhed under the cloud of a proſcription,
Which had not been entirely taken off,
By zeal to maintain the libetty
And to reſtore the ancient proſperity
Of Great Britain.

He ſurvived all his brothers; ſo that the eſtate and honour deſcended to his nephew, the preſent lord viſcount Bolingbroke and St. John, whom he conſtituted likewiſe his teſtamentary-heir: and, as his lady died many years before him, ſo the diſputes in law about her fortune happening to be finally determined about the time of his deceaſe, by that lucky event, the nephew reaped the whole benefit of his uncle's kindneſs immediately.

His lordſhip left the care and advantage of his manuſcripts to Mr. Mallet, who publiſhed three tracts, in one volume 8vo, in 1753, and four volumes more the following year; in which the truſtee, it ſeems, conſulted his own profit more than his noble benefactor's fame; as appears from a preſentment of the grand-jury of Weſtminſter, made on the ſixteenth of October the ſame year, 1754, of theſe poſthumous works in four volumes, "as tending, in the general ſcope of ſeveral pieces therein contained, as well as many particular expreſſions which had been laid before them, to the ſubverſion of religion, government, and morality; and being alſo againſt his majeſty's peace."

Indeed

Indeed it is almoſt needleſs to tell the world now, that, in reſpect to his religion, he was undoubtedly what is ſometimes underſtood by the denomination of an atheiſt. But, however this part of his conduct may be cenſured, yet, with all his paſſions, and with all his faults, he will perhaps, as the writer of his life obſerves, be acknowledged, by poſterity in general, as I think he is by the majority of the preſent age, to have been, in many reſpects, one of the moſt extraordinary perſons who adorned it.

In his exterior, he was wonderfully agreeable. He had a dignity mixed with ſweetneſs in his looks, and a manner that would have captivated the heart, if his perſon had been ever ſo indifferent. He was remarkable for his vivacity, and had a prodigious memory. He was a ſtateſman, an orator, a leader of party; was brought into buſineſs early, purſued it through the moſt vigorous part of his life; enjoyed the ſmiles, endured the frowns, of fortune; and was, beſides, a man of learning, reflection, and wit.

With all theſe qualities, and I think his enemies will allow that he had them all, he could ſcarce write any thing that did not deſerve to be read and to be ſtudied. When this is ſaid, however, we muſt confine ourſelves to the ſubjects to which theſe characters belong; for he ſometimes, as we ſee, made excurſions into others, of which he neither was, nor could

could be expected to be, a perfect maſter: and upon them he wrote like other men. In reality, there is not much danger of being miſled by him in theſe matters: the ſame wiſdom that directs us not to take our politics from prieſts, exclaims againſt receiving our religion from a politician; it is in that character that he excels.

We generally, and indeed juſtly, prefer ſuch writers as have an opportunity of being practically, as well as ſpeculatively, acquainted with the ſubjects on which they write. Demoſthenes and Cicero were ſtateſmen as well as orators. Cæſar was conſpicuous for his learning, as well as his abilities, in the camp and in the cabinet: his Commentaries are a proof of it; and the critic ſpoke truly who ſaid, that he wrote with the ſame ſpirit with which he fought. Machiavel was alike verſed in buſineſs and in books; and that is the true reaſon why his merit is confeſſed even by thoſe who abhor his maxims. In our own country, the writings of Sir Walter Raleigh, and the noble hiſtorian, are juſtly eſteemed at a higher rate than thoſe of men who had not the like opportunities of penetrating to the very bottom of the ſprings and cauſes of thoſe tranſactions which they undertook to examine, and to criticize as well as to record.

From the very ſame motives, the works of this ingenious writer have merited, and, in all probability, will continue to merit, attention and

and applauſe. He lived to ſee the opening of that glorious proſpect which he ſpeaks of, at the winding up of his Idea of a Patriot King, in theſe rapturous terms:

"Thoſe who live to ſee ſuch happy days, and t act in ſo glorious a ſcene, will, perhaps, call to mind, with ſome tenderneſs of ſentiment, when he is no more, a man who contributed his mite to carry on ſo good a work, and who deſired life for nothing ſo much, as to ſee a King of Great Britain the moſt popular man in his country, and a Patriot King at the head of a united people."

What he meant perhaps as a compliment is become a kind of prophecy, fulfilled in the ampleſt manner. It may ſerve as a monumental inſcription. If it had been more extended, it would have been a ſort of funeral-oration of himſelf upon himſelf. It ſeems he delighted to the laſt in regarding diſtant proſpects; and ſhut out the idea of diſſolution by contemplating the effects of his political doctrines in ages beyond his own. And it cannot be denied, that, while either faction or freedom remains among us, his writings on that ſubject will pave their merit and uſe. This they always had: but my meaning is, that they will have it now in an advanced and extraordinary degree: death, in removing him out of the reach of envy, and the rage of jealouſy,

louſy, has extended the utility, and fixed the immortality, of his writings. Their reputation will now reſt upon their merit, without ſuffering any diminution from the failings of their author: failings he had, and who has them not? Were the miniſters he oppoſed without failings? But theſe did not infect his writings. Thoſe were products of his cooler hours, and ſhew us the noble efforts of a great genius, when conducted and ſupported by experience. They open to us all the ſecret ſprings and hidden mechaniſm, not of our conſtitution, for that is nobly plain and gracefully ſimple; but of the executive powers, and the adminiſtration of government; how theſe may be diſordered, ſpoiled, and broken; how they may be diſcerned from the motions of the Machine; and how theſe errors may be repaired or prevented. While he lived, his teſtimony was ever impeached, by a ſuggeſtion that his aim was to have the direction of the Pendulum: but that can be ſaid no more. All his ſkill, all his acuteneſs, all his ſagacity, are now uſeleſs to the Artiſt: but we are conſoled for this, by the conſideration, that they may be ſo much the more uſeful to us and to our country.

Such is the elogium given of him by the writer of the Memoirs of his Life; who, having caſt them into the form of Letters to a Young Gentleman, cloſes the whole in the following words:

" My pen has been employed in ſhewing you, this is no panegyric, but a juſt tribute to merit; and the reſt of the world will gradually learn this from the writings themſelves, which will be now read with leſs prejudice and more reſpect. His writings are the Monuments which he conſecrated to poſterity; and, though He is now no more, Theſe will laſt For Ever."

His lordſhip was eſteemed, almoſt to a degree of adoration, by the firſt poet of his age; who has blazoned his character with the brighteſt colours that wit could invent, or fondneſs beſtow, by immortalizing both his own fame, and that of his noble friend, at whoſe perſuaſion, and by whoſe aſſiſtance, this incomparable didactic poem, his Eſſay on Man, was begun and executed.

Come on, my friend, my genius come along;
Oh, maſter of the Poet and the Song!
And, while the Muſe now ſtoops, or now aſcends,
To man's low paſſions, and their glorious ends,
Teach me, like thee, in various nature wiſe,
To fall with dignity, with temper riſe:
Form'd by thy converſe happily to ſteer,
From gay to grave, from lively to ſevere;
Correct with ſpirit, elegant with eaſe,
Intent to reaſen, or polite to pleaſe.

Oh!

Oh! while along the ſtream of time, thy name
Expanded flies, and gathers all it's fame;
Say, ſhall my little bark attend the ſail,
Purſue the triumph, and partake the gale?
When ſtateſmen, heroes, kings, in duſt repoſe,
Whoſe ſons will bluſh their fathers were thy foes,
Shall this thy verſe to future age pretend,
Thou wer't my guide, philoſopher, and friend?
That, urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art,
From ſound, to things; from fancy, to the heart:
For wit's falſe mirror hold up nature's light,
Shew erring man, Whatever is, is right:
That reaſon, paſſions, anſwer one great aim;
That true ſelf-love and ſocial are the ſame:
That Virtue only makes our Bliſs below;
And all our Knowledge is--Ourſelves to Know?

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